SELECTIONS FROM THE

FATḤ AL-BĀRĪ

by IBN ḤAJAR AL-ʿASQALĀNĪ



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FATḤ AL-BĀRĪ

(Commentary on Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī)

by IBN ḤAJAR AL-ʿASQALĀNĪ

followed by

Twenty Fatwas on Life after Death

Translated by

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INTRODUCTION

THIS BOOKLET INTENDS to introduce non-Arabic speakers to one of the most seminal genres of Muslim religious literature, namely, the hadith commentary. It is surprising that no translations at present exist from this voluminous and influential body of writing, given that there are few hadith which can be understood adequately without reference to the often complex debates which have taken place concerning them between the scholars. These discussions have included investigations of the precise linguistic and lexicological meaning of the Prophetic speech, studies of the *isnād*, debates over the circumstances surrounding the genesis of each hadith (*asbāb al-wurūd*), and issues of abrogation by stronger or later hadiths or by Qur'ānic texts. For this reason no Muslim scholar of repute uses a hadith before checking the commentaries to ascertain its precise meaning, context, and application.

The importance of this literature may be gauged by the fact that at least seventy full commentaries have been written on Imām al-Bukhārī's great *Ṣaḥīḥ*. The best-known of these include *al-Kawākib al-Darārī* by Imām Shams al-Dīn al-Kirmānī (d.786),[1] *'Umdat al-Qārī* by Imām Badr al-Dīn al-ʿAynī (d.855),[2] and the *Irshād al-Sārī* by Imam Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Qasṭallānī (d.923).[3] However the most celebrated is without question the magnificent *Fatḥ al-Bārī* ('Victory of the Creator') by Imām Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, a work which was the crown both of its genre and of the Imām's academic career. It is appreciated by the ulema for the doctrinal soundness of its author, for its complete coverage of Bukhārī's material, its mastery of the relevant Arabic sciences, the wisdom it shows in drawing lessons (*fawā'id*) from the hadiths it expounds, and its skill in resolving complex disputes over variant readings. For Bukhārī's text has not come down to us in a single uniform version, but exists in several 'narrations' (*riwāyāt*), of which the version handed down by al-Kushmayhanī (d.389) on the authority of Bukhārī's pupil al-Firabrī is the one most frequently accepted by the ulema. Ibn Ḥajar frequently uses the Kushmayhanī variant as his standard text, but gives his reasons, often in complex detail, for preferring other readings where these seem to have particular merit. In doing this he makes it clear that he is authorised, through the *ijāza*-system, for all the *riwāyāt* he cites.[4]

Ibn Ḥajar considered the hadith collection of Imām Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī (A.H. 194–256), entitled *al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaḥīḥ* ('The Sound Comprehensive Collection'), to be the most reliable of all the hadith collections of Islam.[5] His respect for the compiler was no less total, as is evident from the short biography which he offers of him, which portrays him as a saint as well as a scholar. He recounts, on Firabrī's eye-witness authority, how the imām would make *ghusl* and pray two *rakʿas* before including any hadith in his work,[6] and always carried on his person one of the hairs of the Prophet ﷺ.[7] He collected his *Ṣaḥīḥ* in Khurasān, and arranged it in the sanctuary at Makka, and completed it while seated between the minbar and the Prophetic Tomb in Madina.[8] His miracles (*karāmāt*) are numerous and well-attested. Once, after helping to build a fortress to defend the Muslim community, he provided the labourers with three small coins' worth of bread, but even though there were a hundred labourers, there was enough for all.[9] He ate little, but was endlessly generous to his students. One of his scribes, Muḥammad ibn Abī Ḥātim, said: 'When I was with him on a journey we would stay in a single room together, and I would see him rising fifteen or twenty times in a night to light the lantern, and work on an *isnād*, after which he would lie down again. I asked him: "Why do you impose all of this on yourself instead of waking me?" and he would reply, "You are a young man, and I don't wish to interrupt your sleep."'[10] Ibn Abī Ḥātim further related: 'I once saw al-Bukhārī in a dream. He was walking behind the Prophet ﷺ, setting his feet directly in the Prophet's footsteps.'[11] And when he was lowered into his grave, a perfume like musk poured out from it. 'So many people took dust from his grave,' recalled another of his students, 'that we had to place a wooden fence around it.'[12]

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī narrated that ʿAbd al-Wāḥid ibn Ādam said: 'I once saw the Prophet ﷺ, with a group of his companions, in a dream. He was standing, and I greeted him, and when he returned my greeting, I said: "Why are you standing here, O Messenger of Allah?" and he replied: "I am waiting for Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl." A few days later the news of al-Bukhārī's death reached me, and when I checked I realised that he had died at the moment when I beheld that dream.'[13]

SHAYKH AL-ISLĀM IBN ḤAJAR AL-ʿASQALĀNĪ[14]

Abu'l-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn Ḥajar's family originated in the district of Qābis in Tunisia. Some members of the family had settled in Palestine, which they left again when faced with the Crusader threat, but he himself was born in Egypt in 773, the son of the Shāfiʿī scholar and poet Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī and the learned and aristocratic Tujjār. Both died in his infancy, and he was later to praise his elder sister, Sitt al-Rakb,[15] for acting as his 'second mother'. The two children became

wards of the brother of his father's first wife, Zakī al-Dīn al-Kharrūbī, who entered the young Ibn Ḥajar in a Qur'ānic school (*kuttāb*) when he reached five years of age. Here he excelled, learning Sūrat Maryam in a single day, and progressing to the memorisation of texts such as the *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn al-Ḥājib on *uṣūl*. By the time he accompanied al-Kharrūbī to Makka at the age of 12, he was competent enough to lead the Tarāwīḥ prayers in the Holy City, where he spent much time studying and recalling God amid the pleasing simplicity of Kharrūbī's house, the Bayt al-ʿAynā', whose windows looked directly upon the Black Stone. Two years later his protector died, and his education in Egypt was entrusted to the hadith scholar Shams al-Dīn ibn al-Qaṭṭān, who entered him in the courses given by the great Cairene scholars al-Bulqīnī (d.806) and Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d.804) in Shāfiʿī *fiqh*, and of Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī (d.806) in hadith, after which he was able to travel to Damascus and Jerusalem, where he studied under Shams al-Dīn al-Qalqashandī (d.809), Badr al-Dīn al-Bālisī (d.803), and Fāṭima bint al-Manjā al-Tanūkhiyya (d.803). After a further visit to Mecca and Madina, and to the Yemen, he returned to Egypt.

When he reached 25 he married the lively and brilliant Ānas Khātūn, then 18 years of age. She was a hadith expert in her own right, holding *ijāzas* from Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī, and she gave celebrated public lectures in the presence of her husband to crowds of ulema among whom was Imām al-Sakhāwī. After the marriage, Ibn Ḥajar moved into her house where he lived until his death. Many noted how she surrounded herself with the old, the poor and the physically handicapped, whom it was her privilege and pleasure to support. So widely did her reputation for sanctity extend that during her fifteen years of widowhood, which she devoted to good works, she received a proposal from Imām ʿAlam al-Dīn al-Bulqīnī, who considered that a marriage to a woman of such charity and *baraka* would be a source of great pride.[16]

Once esconced in Egypt, Ibn Ḥajar taught in the Sufi lodge (*khāniqāh*) of Baybars for some twenty years, and then in the hadith college known as Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Kāmiliyya. During these years, he served on occasion as the Shāfiʿī chief justice of Egypt.

It was in Cairo that the Imām wrote some of the most thorough and beneficial books ever added to the library of Islamic civilisation. Among these are *al-Durar al-Kāmina* (a biographical dictionary of leading figures of the eighth century), a commentary on the *Forty Hadith* of Imām al-Nawawī (a scholar for whom he had particular respect); *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb* (an abbreviation of *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, the encyclopedia of hadith narrators by al-Mizzī), *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-Ṣaḥāba* (the most widely-used dictionary of Companions), and *Bulūgh al-Marām min adillat al-aḥkām* (on Shāfiʿī *fiqh*).

Ibn Ḥajar commenced the enormous task of assembling his *Fatḥ al-Bārī* in 817.

It began as a series of formal dictations to his hadith students, after which he wrote it out in his own hand and circulated it section by section to his pupils, who would discuss it with him once a week. As the work progressed and its author's fame grew, the Islamic world took a close interest in the new work. In 833, Tīmūr's son Shāhrūkh sent a letter to the Mamlūk sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay requesting several gifts, including a copy of the *Fatḥ*, and Ibn Ḥajar was able to send him the first three volumes. In 839 the request was repeated, and further volumes were sent, until, in the reign of al-Ẓāhir Jaqmaq, the whole text was finished and a complete copy was dispatched. Similarly, the Moroccan sultan Abū Fāris ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Ḥafṣī requested a copy before its completion. When it was finished, in Rajab 842, a great celebration was held in an open place near Cairo, in the presence of the ulema, judges, and leading personages of Egypt. Ibn Ḥajar sat on a platform and read out the final pages of his work, and then poets recited eulogies and gold was distributed. It was, says one historian, 'the greatest celebration of the age in Egypt.'[17]

Ibn Ḥajar died in 852. His funeral was attended by 'fifty thousand people', including the sultan and the caliph; 'even the Christians grieved.' He was remembered as a gentle man, short, slender, and white-bearded, a lover of chess and calligraphy, much inclined to charity; 'good to those who wronged him, and forgiving to those he was able to punish.'[18] A lifetime's proximity to the hadith had imbued him with a deep love of the Messenger ﷺ, as is shown nowhere more clearly than in the poetry assembled in his *Dīwān*. A few lines will suffice to show this well:

> By the gate of your generosity stands a sinner, who is mad with love,
> O best of mankind in radiance of face and countenance!
> Through you he seeks a means [*tawassala*], hoping for Allah's forgiveness of slips;
> from fear of Him, his eyelid is wet with pouring tears.
> Although his genealogy attributes him to a stone [*ḥajar*],
> how often tears have flowed, sweet, pure and fresh!
> Praise of you does not do you justice, but perhaps,
> In eternity, its verses will be transformed into mansions.
> My praise of you shall continue for as long as I live,
> For I see nothing that could ever deflect me from your praise.[19]

THE TRANSLATION

The following pages can hope to give no more than a fleeting taste of this literature. They have been selected from the Imām's commentary on Bukhārī's Kitāb al-Raqāʾiq (Section on 'Words that Soften the Heart'). The hadith and page numbers are shown before each translated selection. Not all chapter headings have been translated. Moreover, for obvious reasons, most of the Imām's intricate discussions of Arabic grammatical points have been omitted.

6412/1

Al-Makkī ibn Ibrāhīm < ʿAbdallāh ibn Saʿīd, who is Ibn Abī Hind < his father, that Ibn ʿAbbās ؓ said: 'The Prophet ﷺ said: "There are two blessings in which many people are cheated: health and leisure."'

Two blessings: a blessing [*niʿma*] is 'a goodly state'; it is sometimes defined as 'a benefit conferred upon another out of kindness'.

The word cheating may be vocalised as *ghabn* or *ghaban*. According to al-Jawharī, the former refers to cheating in sales, and the latter to cheating in respect of opinions.[20] On this basis both may be appropriate to this hadith, since the individual who fails to use these two blessings appropriately is cheated, both in that he has sold them at a ridiculously low price, and in that his opinion is not esteemed in consequence. According to Ibn Baṭṭāl, the meaning of the hadith is that a person cannot be leisured until he is financially secure and sound of body; hence whoever experiences this should be careful not to be 'cheated' by abandoning the thanks due to Allah for His blessings, one aspect of such thanks taking the form of obeying His commands and prohibitions. Whoever is lackadaisical in this is 'cheated'.

Many people: an indication that only a few are granted success in this. Ibn al-Jawzī remarks that a person may be healthy but not leisured because of his preoccupation with earning a living; conversely, he might be financially independent but in ill health; so when both come together, and he is overwhelmed by sloth and hence abandons good acts, he is said to be 'cheated'. The upshot of this is that 'this world is the sowing-ground of the next',[21] and the place where one trades for the sake of profit in the Afterlife. Hence whoever uses his leisure and health in the obedience of Allah is to be envied [*maghbūṭ*], while whoever uses them in disobedience is cheated [*maghbūn*], since in due course his leisure must be succeeded by work, and his health by sickness or decrepitude.

Al-Ṭībī says: 'The Prophet ﷺ coined the parable of a merchant possessed of capital, which he aims to preserve intact while making a profit. The way he may accomplish this is by taking every precaution in selecting the people with whom he deals, and by being honest and intelligent so as not to be cheated. Now, health and leisure are one's capital, and one should deal with Allah by maintaining faith, and struggling against the ego [*nafs*] and against enemies of the religion, so that one may gain the profit of this world and the next. This is akin to His statement (Glorious is He!): *Shall I point you to a trade which shall save you from a painful punishment?* [61:10] Consequently he must avoid obeying the *nafs* and responding to Satan, lest he lose his capital as well as his profit. His saying in which many people

are cheated resembles His saying: *And scarce among My slaves are the thankful*: [34:13] the "scarce" in this Qur'anic text is the reciprocal of the "many" in the hadith.'

Al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī states: 'There are different views as to which is the first blessing which may come upon a slave of God. Some say that it is faith, others that it is life, while still others hold it to be health. But the first of these is the preferable understanding, since it represents an unconditional blessing; while life and health are worldly blessings and are not real blessings at all unless accompanied by faith. In their absence, 'many people are cheated', that is to say, they lose all or part of their profit. Whoever goes along with his Soul that Commands Evil [*al-nafs al-ammāra bi'l-sū'*], which eternally summons us to take our ease, and abandons any respect for the divinely-appointed boundaries and of consistent acts of obedience, has been cheated. Likewise if he is at leisure, for work might have served as an excuse for him.

/7

The life of this world is but games and play [...] *enjoyment of delusion.* [57:20]

Ibn ʿAṭiyya said: 'What is meant by *the life of this world* [*al-ḥayāt al-dunyā*] in this verse relates to conduct that is uniquely for this world; the verse does not apply to acts of obedience to Allah or to indispensable means of livelihood. The image invoked by this parable is that of a man, who is born, grows strong, gains money, children, and leadership, and then begins to decline, as his hair grows grey, and he weakens and becomes ill, and his health and money fall prey to various forms of affliction, until he dies, so that his body melts away and his property passes to others. Hence he resembles a piece of land on which rain falls, bringing up splendid and attractive plants, which then fade and dry out, and become dust blown about by the wind.'

According to al-Farrā', the reciter may not pause after the words *painful punishment* [*ʿadhābun shadīd*], since the passage signifies that there shall be either *painful punishment* or *forgiveness from Allah, and good-pleasure*. However others prefer that one pause after *painful punishment*, since this will bring about an intense repulsion from the world; and one should then start afresh with *forgiveness from Allah, and good-pleasure*, emphasising that the punishment is for the unbelievers, while the latter blessings are for the people of faith.

After citing the hadith, Ghazālī, in his *Revival*, writes as follows: 'Know that in their forgetfulness the people of *dunyā* are like a group of people sailing upon a ship. When they come to an island, and disembark to relieve themselves, the captain warns them against returning late, and instructs them to remain only so long as is necessary, lest he raise anchor and set sail without them. Heeding this, some of them hurry back quickly, and hence find themselves able to sit in the best and most

spacious parts of the ship. The others, however, behave in different ways. Some become entranced by gazing at the island's flowers and rippling streams, and its gems and precious metals, and then suddenly come to, and hasten back to the ship, and although they find spaces which are inferior to those occupied by those who preceded them, they are still safe. Others are so preoccupied by the flowers that they cannot bring themselves to leave them, so they pick and carry as many as they can. When they reach the ship they find only narrow, uncomfortable places, and are made still less comfortable by the fact that they cannot bring themselves to throw out what they have brought with them, although the flowers fade and dry soon enough. When the wind gets up, they are forced to throw their dry flowers overboard, and escape just with their own lives. Others, however, have penetrated the jungles and forgotten the captain's advice, so that when they hear his final call to depart, they rush back only to find that the ship has sailed without them, and they remain marooned with what they had collected, until they all perish. Still others are so obsessed with gathering good things that they are deaf even to the captain's cry. Of these, some are eaten by wild beasts, or are poisoned by snakes, while others wander aimlessly until they die of hunger. This class resembles the people who live for the world, who are preoccupied with its mortal pleasures, and live in heedlessness of their future. How repulsive is the man who claims to be intelligent and full of insight, and yet is deluded by gems, silver and gold, and by flowers and fruits, nothing of which will accompany him to his destination!'

6416/8

ʿAlī ibn ʿAbdallāh < Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abu'l-Mundhir al-Ṭufāwī < al-Aʿmash < Mujāhid < ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿUmar ؓ, who said: 'Allah's Messenger ﷺ once took hold of my shoulder, saying: "Be in this world as though a stranger or a wayfarer."'

Al-Nawawī comments: 'The meaning of the hadith is that you must not incline towards the world, or adopt it as your homeland, or tell yourself that you are to remain in it, or be any more attached to it than is a foreigner outside his country.'

The hadith also shows that a teacher may touch the limbs of a pupil during instruction, and that someone giving advice may do likewise, for the sake of creating intimacy and attracting his attention.

6421/17

Muslim < Hishām < Qatāda < Anas ibn Mālik ؓ, who said: 'Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "The son of Adam grows old, and two things grow with him: love of money, and love of longevity."'

Al-Qurṭubī said: 'The hadith establishes that the desire for a long life and abundant wealth is disliked [*makrūh*].'

Another has said: 'The reason why these two matters are singled out here is that the most beloved thing to a son of Adam is his own self, so that he longs for it to endure; while he loves money since that is one of the main factors in prolonging health.'

6424/18

Qutayba < Ya'qūb ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān < 'Amr < Sa'īd al-Maqburī < Abū Hurayra, who said that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: 'Allah the Exalted says: "There is no reward other than the Garden for My believing slave who, when a loved one is taken in death from him, then sincerely seeks Allah's reward."'

The expression a loved one extends beyond one's family. Under this head is also to be placed the following account narrated by Aḥmad and al-Nasā'ī on the authority of Qurra ibn Iyās: 'A man once came with a son of his to the Prophet ﷺ, who asked him: "Do you love him?", to which he replied that he did. When the Prophet subsequently missed him, he enquired, "What became of so-and-so?" and they said: "O Messenger of Allah, his son died." And he said, "Do you not wish that you should come to the gate of the Garden and find him waiting for you?" and they asked, "O Messenger of God! Is this for him alone, or does it apply to us all?" and he replied: "To you all."' Its *isnād* fulfills the condition of the sound narration (*ṣaḥīḥ*), and it has been declared so by Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Ḥākim.[22]

6446/53

Aḥmad ibn Yūnus < Abū Bakr [Ibn 'Ayyāsh] < Abu Ḥaṣīn < Abū Ṣāliḥ < Abū Hurayra, that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: 'Richness does not lie in many possessions; richness is the richness of the soul.'

Ibn Baṭṭāl said: 'The hadith means that copious wealth does not constitute real richness. For many people upon whom Allah has heaped property are unsatisfied with what they have been given, and struggle to acquire more, and pay no attention to where it comes from; and such people are in reality impoverished because of their craving. Real richness is richness of the soul, which takes place when one finds a satisfying sufficiency in what one has been given, and does not covet more or struggle to seek it. That is the person who is genuinely rich.

According to al-Qurṭubī: 'The meaning of the hadith is that the richness that is useful, great or praiseworthy, is the richness of the soul. When a person's soul is detached and independent, it loses its covetousness, and thus becomes exalted and splendid, and acquires more favour, detachment, nobility, and praiseworthiness than the soul of the wealthy person, who reached his position by impoverishing his soul through his covetousness, which plunged him into base matters and ignoble practices through the meanness of his aspiration and his avarice. The rich person thus finds himself condemned by many people, whose estimate of him is low, until he becomes the most despised and base of men.'

Richness of soul only comes about through richness of the heart, which must exist in absolute neediness of its Lord in all respects, realising that He is the Giver and Withholder, until he is satisfied with His decree and renders thanks for His blessings, and hurries back to Him to relieve his suffering. From this there develops the heart's absolute need of its Lord, and the richness of soul which renders a believer independent of all that is not Him.

The chapter on the merit of poverty

It is said that al-Bukhārī uses this account, which follows the preceding discussion, to determine the point at issue with regard to preferring poverty over wealth, or vice versa, since the text richness is the richness of the soul provides a definition and a delimitation. All the texts that have been related in connection with the merit of wealth have to be interpreted in this sense: since whosoever is not rich of soul is to be criticised, how can he have superior merit? It is likewise with the texts which have come down to us in connection with the merit of poverty, since whoever is not rich of soul is poor of soul: the condition from which the Prophet ﷺ sought refuge in Allah. The 'poverty' in dispute is the lack of money. As for the 'poverty' mentioned in Allah's word *O mankind; you are the poor before Allah, and Allah is the Rich, the Praiseworthy*, [35:15] what is meant here is the creature's abject need of the Creator, since for creatures, poverty is inescapably intrinsic to their essence; while Allah is the Rich, and stands in need of no-one.

'Poverty' [*faqr*] is also applied to a technical matter known to the Sufis, and in connection with which their discourses are various. The upshot of their discussion is, as Abū Ismā'īl al-Anṣārī put it: 'to keep the hand detached from the *dunyā*, whether in its possession or its seeking, or its praise or its condemnation.' Their explanation of this is that worldly things should not be in one's heart, whether one's hand has acquired them or not. This refers back to the previous hadith account which explains that richness is 'richness of the soul', and corresponds to the point we demonstrated in our commentary upon it. In this case, 'poverty' [*faqr*] signifies need [*faqr*] for money.

Ibn Baṭṭāl writes as follows on the question of assessing the comparative merit of wealth and poverty: 'People have engaged in a lengthy argument here. Some regard poverty as preferable, using as their proof the hadiths in this and other chapters. Those who view wealth as better use other proofs, among them certain

hadiths cited prior to this chapter, such as the hadith of Sa'd in the section on Bequests which runs: 'It is better to leave your heirs wealthy than to leave them as dependents,' and the hadith of Ka'b al-Aḥbār in which he is asked for his advice about renouncing all one's wealth, his reply being: 'Keep some of your wealth, for that is better for you;' and the hadith 'The people of property have carried the rewards away' which ends '*That is God's grace, which He gives to whom He will*'. [57:21][23] [According to Ibn Baṭṭāl], 'The best view I have encountered on this question is the saying of Aḥmad ibn Naṣr al-Dāūdī: "Poverty and wealth are two trials from Allah, by which He tests His slaves for patience and gratitude." All merit lies in sufficiency, as He has said: *Do not render your hand chained to your neck, nor extend it fully*.' [17:29]

Another scholar to have preferred the principle of sufficiency is al-Qurṭubī: 'Allah the Exalted combined in His Prophet all three states: poverty, wealth, and sufficiency. The former was the earliest of these conditions, and he discharged its concomitant duty of disciplining the self [*riyāḍat al-nafs*]; then the conquests were granted to him and he became wealthy, and he discharged the associated duty here also by giving it to the deserving; he himself confined himself to what was essential for his dependents, and this is "sufficiency", his state when he died.'

Ibn al-Jawzī comments that 'The warning against wealth is not directed against wealth as such, but insofar as wealth may obstruct people from Allah; so also vice versa. There are many wealthy people whose wealth has not distracted them from Allah, and many paupers whose poverty distracts them from Allah. But it is more usually the case that the poor man is further removed from danger, since the trial of wealth is stronger than the trial of poverty; and to be empty-handed is a form of protection.'

Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq, the shaykh of Abu'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, held that the wealthy man is better than the pauper in that richness is an attribute of the Creator, and poverty an attribute of creatures, and the attributes of Allah are superior to those of His creatures. Many great scholars have approved this view; however it is arguable in view of the material supplied at the beginning of this chapter, from which it appears that this point in fact does not enter into the essence of the dispute, since the dispute does not pertain to the essence of the two qualities, but rather to their accidents.

6451/64

'Abdallāh ibn Abī Shayba < Abū Usāma < Hishām < his father < 'Ā'isha (may Allah be pleased with her), who said: 'When the Prophet ﷺ died, there was no meat on my shelf, only a little barley on a shelf of mine, from which I ate, until this continued for a period I considered excessive, and I weighed it, and it ran out.'

It appears that this was a special quality granted to 'Ā'isha through the *baraka* of

the Prophet ﷺ. A similar occurrence is described in a hadith about the saddle-bag of Abū Hurayra which al-Tirmidhī considers 'good' (*ḥasan*), and which is also narrated by al-Bayhaqī in the *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwa*: Abū Hurayra said: 'I once came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ with some dates, saying: "Pray for *baraka* in them for me!" He held them, and then prayed, after which he said: "Take them, and put them in a saddle-bag. When you want to take some out, insert your hand, but do not stir them." When on the path of Allah [on *jihād*] I carried a particular load, and we would eat, and give dates to others, while the saddle-bag remained hung from my hips constantly. When 'Uthmān was killed, this came to an end.'

From the hadith it can be learned that whoever is given some form of provision, or is honoured with a miracle [*karāma*],[24] or receives a divine subtlety in any matter, must constantly give thanks, and recognise that the gift is from Allah, and not attempt to change that condition. And Allah knows best.

6452/65

'Umar ibn Dharr < Mujāhid, that Abū Hurayra used to say: 'Allah! He besides Whom there is no other god! I used to press my liver to the ground out of hunger, and used to bind a stone against my stomach out of hunger. One day when I was sitting in their roadway, near their exiting-place, Abū Bakr passed by. I asked him about a verse in Allah's Book, my only reason for asking him being that he might give me something to take away my hunger. He went on, however, without doing so. Then 'Umar passed by me, and I asked him about a verse in Allah's Book, my only reason for asking him again being that he might give me something to remove my hunger. He went on, however, without doing so. Then Abu'l-Qāsim ﷺ passed by. When he saw me he smiled, and knew what was in my soul and on my face. Then he said: "Abū Hirr!" and I replied: "At your service, Messenger of God!"and he said: "Join me!" So I followed him as he passed on his way, and he entered [his house]. When I asked leave to enter, he admitted me, and we went in; whereupon he found some milk in a cup. "Where is this milk from?" he enquired, and they told him, "Such-and-such a man, or such-and-such a woman, gave it to you." He said, "Abū Hirr!" and I replied, "At your service, Messenger of God!" He told me, "Go to the People of the Veranda,[25] and call them to me." The People of the Veranda were the guests of Islam, having refuge in no family, wealth, or any person. When a donation of charity [*ṣadaqa*] came to him, he would send it to them and take none of it himself. When a gift [*hadiyya*] came to him, however, he would send for them, partake in it himself, and share it with them. This troubled me, and I asked what might remain of this milk after it had been distributed among the People of the Veranda, when my own need to drink from it and thus regain my strength was more urgent. But he had given me a command, and it was my responsibility to give it to them. What

could remain to me of that milk? Because there is no alternative to obeying God and His Messenger ﷺ, however, I went to invite them, whereupon they came, asking permission to enter, which was granted them, and they took their seats around the house. He said: "Abū Hirr!" to which I replied, "At your service, O Messenger of God!" and he told me to take it and give it to them. So I picked it up and began to pass it around them. One man would drink until his thirst was quenched, after which he would return the cup to me so that I might pass it to the next man, who also drank until he was quenched, until finally, with everyone satisfied, it reached the Prophet ﷺ, who took it, placed it upon his hand, smiled at me, and then said: "Abū Hirr!" I replied, "At your service, Messenger of God!" and he said: "You and I remain." "That is true," I said, and he told me to sit and drink. I did so, but he told me again to drink, and I drank again, but he continued to tell me to drink until I said: "No, by the One Who sent you with the truth, I can drink no more." At this he said: "Show it to me," and I gave him the cup. Praising God, he said, "In the name of God," and drank what remained.'

To bind a stone [*hajar*] against my stomach. According to al-Khaṭṭābī: 'This has seemed problematic to some, who have imagined that there is an error in the text. On their view the correct reading is *ḥujaz*, which would mean "belts". But whoever has lived in the Ḥijāz and is familiar with their usages knows that the word *hajar* means "a stone". They were frequently afflicted by hunger, and, when their empty stomachs prevented them from standing up straight, they would take smooth stones the size of a hand, or somewhat larger, and tie them to their stomachs with a tight band, enabling them to stand upright. Pressing the liver to the ground refers to something similar.'

That he would give me something to take away my hunger: in the reading of Kushmayhanī: 'that he would make me follow him.' This is accepted by most of the narrators of the text.

It may be that the reason why Abū Bakr and ʿUmar were excused is that they took Abū Hurayra's question at face value. Alternatively, they may have understood what he wanted, but did not have at that time any food to give him.

he smiled, and knew what was in my soul: Abū Hurayra intuited from his smile that he knew his plight, since a smile can sometimes be the result of pleasure, and at other times be a means of bringing solace and a sense of familiarity to the one at whom one smiles. The second interpretation is stronger here.

Abū Hirr: a form of his name which renders the feminine masculine, and the diminutive normative, since his agnomen [*kunya*] was originally Abū Hurayra, indicating the feminine diminutive of *hirra*.

The People of the Veranda were the guests of Islam: an indication that Abū Hurayra was himself one of them.

or any person: including friends as well as relatives. It is narrated in a hadith from Ṭalḥa ibn ʿAmr reported by Ibn Ḥanbal, Ibn Ḥibban and al-Ḥākim that 'whenever a man came to the Prophet ﷺ, he would stay with an acquaintance if he had one, otherwise he would stay with the People of the Veranda.'

and share it with them: The Prophet ﷺ accepted gifts, but not charity [*ṣadaqa*].

I was to be the one to give it to them: as though this were a custom, since he kept company constantly with the Prophet ﷺ, and served him. It has already been seen in a hadith from Ṭalḥa ibn ʿUbaydillāh that 'Abū Hurayra was destitute [*miskīn*], with neither family nor money, and would go around with the Prophet ﷺ wherever he went.' (Narrated by al-Bukhārī in his *Tārīkh*.[26])

there is no alternative to obeying God and His Messenger: because of His word: *Whoever obeys the Messenger has obeyed God.* [4:80]

they took their seats around the house: that is, each sat in the place that was most appropriate for him. I have not discovered their number at that time, although it has already been related in the beginning of the Book of Prayer on the authority of Abū Hurayra that 'I saw seventy of the People of the Veranda,' a phrase which implies that there were in fact more than seventy. Abū Nuʿaym in his *Ḥilya* has collected their names, which number approximately one hundred; however much of this is not firmly established, as Abū Nuʿaym himself indicates in the following way: 'The number of the People of the Veranda varied. Sometimes they would be many because they had gathered together, and at other times they would be few because they had dispersed either for a military expedition, or a journey, or to seek a *fatwā*.' In his *ʿAwārif*, al-Suhrawardī states that they were four hundred.[27]

who took it: Rawḥ adds: 'and something was left over in it.'

smiled: as though he intuited [*tafarrasa*] the belief of Abū Hurayra that no milk would be left.[28]

he praised God, and said, "In the name of God": he praised God for having bestowed the *baraka* which was in the milk, and said 'in the name of God' because he was about to drink.

and drank what remained: in the version of Rawḥ: 'and drank of what remained', indicating that there was still some left over, perhaps for the others in the house, if any were present.

In addition to the above lessons, the hadith teaches us the following: [1] that it is preferable to drink while seated; [2] that the one who serves should pass the vessel to each guest in turn, and take it back from him before serving the next guest, rather than obliging the guests to pass it round themselves, since that would lower the rank of the guest; [3] it reveals a tremendous miracle, many comparable examples of which have already been cited in the chapter on the Signs of Prophethood, which document the multiplication of food and drink through his *baraka* ﷺ; [4] it

shows that satiety is lawful, given the words of Abū Hurayra: 'I can drink no more', which the Prophet accepted (although it is possible that the permissibility here was restricted specifically to this event, given the *ḥasan* hadith of Ibn 'Umar related by al-Tirmidhī which runs: 'On the Day of Arising, the hungriest shall be those who were most often sated in this world'); [5] the principle that concealing one's need and hinting at it is preferable to announcing it explicitly; [6] the noble generosity of the Prophet ﷺ, who put others before himself; [7] a reminder of the straitened circumstances of the Companions, and the merit of Abū Hurayra, who abstained from proclaiming his request, contenting himself with hinting at it instead; [8] Abū Hurayra's preference for obeying the Prophet ﷺ over the desire of his *nafs*, despite his intense need; [9] the merit of the People of the Veranda; [10] that the invited guest may not enter his host's house before asking permission; [11] that every guest should sit in the place that is most appropriate for him; [12] an indication of the closeness of Abū Bakr and 'Umar to the Messenger ﷺ; [13] that a great man may call his servant by his agnomen; [14] that it is permissible to shorten someone's name, in the manner explained; [15] that one may act upon intuition [*firāsa*]; [16] that someone who is being called may respond with the word *Labbayk* [At your service!]; [17] that a servant should seek permission to enter of the one he serves when he enters his house; [18] a man's asking about what is new in his house; [19] the Prophet's acceptance of gifts, and that he consumed part of them but would prefer the poor, and that he abstained from charity [*ṣadaqa*], which he would distribute to the deserving; [20] that the one who gives others to drink should be the last one to drink, with the exception of the host, who drinks after him; [21] that one should praise Allah for blessings, and name Him before drinking.

6454/75

'Uthmān [ibn Abī Shayba] < Jarīr < Manṣūr < Ibrāhīm < al-Aswad, that 'Ā'isha (may Allah be pleased with her) said: 'The family of Muḥammad ﷺ never ate their fill of wheat foods for three consecutive nights from the time he came to Madina until his death.'

This is what the Messenger ﷺ preferred, although he was in a position to enjoy the *dunyā* expansively, as Tirmidhī narrates on the authority of Abū Umāma: 'My Lord offered to turn the valley-floor of Makka into gold for me, and I said, "No, my Lord; but I shall be filled one day, and go hungry the next, so that when I am hungry I may humble myself to You in petition, and when I am filled, I render You thanks."'

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Chapter on Hope with Fear

Looking in hope should not cut one off from fear, and vice versa, lest the former lead one into a Divine ruse, and the latter into despair. 'Hope' [*rajā'*] means that someone guilty of a shortcoming should have a good opinion of what Allah will do, and hope that He will erase his sin; likewise in the case of someone who has carried out an obedient act which he hopes will be accepted. A man who, without sorrowing or ceasing, plunges into disobedience hoping not to be taken to task, is deceived.

Admirable is the saying of Abū 'Uthmān al-Ḥīrī: 'It is a sign of felicity that you should obey God, and fear that your action will not be accepted; and it is a sign of damnation that you should rebel against Him and hope to be saved.'

It is said that fear is the preferable state for a person who is healthy, and that hope is preferable for someone who is sick. Some say that on one's deathbed one should limit oneself to hope alone, since this entails absolute neediness of Allah, as in the hadith which runs: 'Let none of you die without harbouring a good opinion of Allah.' But others say that fear is never completely to be renounced, since no-one should be entirely convinced that he is safe. This is supported by the hadith which al-Tirmidhī narrates on the authority of Anas, that the Prophet ﷺ once came in upon a young man who was dying, and asked: 'How are you', to which the man replied: 'My hope is in Allah, and my fear is for my sins.' Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: 'These two things never conjoin in the heart of a slave of Allah in this condition without Allah giving him what he hopes for, and saving him from what he fears.'

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Chapter: Seclusion gives the Believer Rest from Bad Company

Ibn al-Mubārak relates that 'Umar said: 'Take your share of seclusion.'

How admirable is the statement of al-Junayd, may Allah grant benefit through his *baraka*: 'The endurance of seclusion is easier than forced politeness with company.'

Al-Khaṭṭābī said: 'There would be great good in seclusion even were it to bring nothing more than safety from backbiting and from seeing evils which one cannot remove.'

6495/126

Abū Nu'aym < al-Mājishūn < 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ṣa'ṣa'a < his father < that he heard Abū Sa'īd saying: 'I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: "There shall come upon the people a time when a Muslim's best wealth will be some sheep with which he

follows the mountain gorges and the places of rain, fleeing with his religion from trials [*fitan*].'"

Al-Khaṭṭābī records that 'seclusion and socialising vary depending on their entailments. The proof-texts which have come down urging people to come together are to be interpreted as applying to gatherings for the sake of obedience to Allah, the imāms, and religious matters; and vice-versa.[29] As for physical company and separation, it is preferable for whoever knows how to be self-sufficient in his livelihood and in preserving his religion to retreat from keeping the company of other people, on condition that he attend the prayer in congregation, greet Muslims with the *salām*, and uphold the rights of other Muslims in such matters as visiting the sick and attending funerals. What is required is to renounce superfluous association with others, since that leads to a preoccupation of the mind and wastes time that could be spent in more important things. Meeting with others should be treated like one's need for lunch and supper: so that one limits oneself to what is necessary. This will bring more peace to body and heart alike.'

Al-Qushayrī states in his *Risāla*: 'The way of the man who chooses seclusion is that he should view the people as being thereby secured from his own evil, not the other way around. For the former attitude leads to a belittling of one's *nafs*, which is a trait of the humble, while the latter impels one to view oneself as superior, and hence breeds arrogance.'

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Chapter: Eyeservice and Love of Repute

'Eyeservice' [*riyā'*] is to display one's service to Allah so that others may behold it and praise the one who does it. 'Love of Repute' [*sum'a*] is similar to eyeservice, except that it relates to the sense of hearing, while eyeservice pertains to vision.

Al-Ghazālī said: 'It means to seek a position in people's hearts by making a show of praiseworthy traits.'

Ibn 'Abd al-Salām said: 'Eyeservice is to act for other than Allah, while love of repute is to hide one's works which are for Allah, but then to speak of them to others.'

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Chapter: The one who struggles against his *nafs*, for the obedience of Allah, the Glorious and Majestic

Struggle [*mujāhada*] means restraining the *nafs* from its desire for any activity other than *'ibāda*.

Ibn Baṭṭāl said: 'A man's struggle [*jihād*] against himself is the most perfect *jihād*. Allah the Exalted has said: *As for he who fears the standing before his Lord, and denies his self its passion* ... [79:40] It comes about by restraining the *nafs* from sins, from dubious matters, and from much indulgence in permissible pleasures.'

Al-Qushayrī relates from his shaykh, Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq: 'Whoever is not a person of *mujāhada* at the beginning, will never encounter the perfume of this Path.'

Abū 'Amr ibn Bujayd said: 'Whoever finds his religion to be precious for him, will pay little heed to his *nafs*.'

Al-Qushayrī said: 'The basis of struggling with the *nafs* is to wean it from familiar things, and to force it away from its whims. The *nafs* has two qualities: plunging into pleasures, and refraining from acts of obedience. *Mujāhada*, therefore, is made against these tendencies.'

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Chapter: Humility

6501/136

Mālik ibn Ismā'īl < Zuhayr < Ḥumayd < that Anas ﷺ reported that the Prophet ﷺ had a camel called al-'Aḍbā', which was faster than any other, until a bedouin came on a fast camel and went even faster than it. The Muslims were taken aback by this, saying, 'Al-'Aḍbā' has been beaten in a race!' but Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: 'It is upon Allah never to raise up something in the world without lowering it.'

Ibn Baṭṭāl said: 'This hadith reveals [1] the baseness of the world in God's sight; [2] the duty of renouncing boasting and pride; [3] that everything of little significance is to be considered base; [4] hence it is the duty of every intelligent person to renounce it, and to renounce much competition in seeking it.'

Al-Ṭabarī said: 'Humbleness is in one's worldly as well as religious interest. For if people were to be humble in this world, rancour would vanish, and they would find rest from the exhaustion which ensues from boasting and pride.'

The hadith also reveals [5] the excellent character of the Prophet ﷺ, and his humbleness when a bedouin was faster than him in a race; [6] the permissibility of racing.

6502/136

Muḥammad ibn 'Uthmān ibn Karāma < Khālid ibn Mukhallad < Sulaymān ibn Bilāl < Sharīk ibn 'Abdallāh ibn Abī Nimr, that Abū Hurayra said: 'Allah's Messenger said: "Allah the Exalted has said: 'Whoever harms a friend [*walī*] of Mine, I declare war on him. My slave draws near to Me with nothing more beloved to Me than that which I have made obligatory upon him. And My slave continues to draw nearer to Me with optional acts of devotion [*nawāfil*] until I love him. And when I love him, I am his ear with which he hears, his eye with which he sees, his

hand with which he strikes, and his foot on which he walks. If he asks Me, I surely bestow it upon him, and if he asks My protection, I surely grant it to him. I do not hesitate in anything which I am to do more than in taking the soul of the believer: he dislikes death, and I dislike to bring him harm.'"'

Allah the Exalted has said: Al-Kirmānī remarks that this is a Hadith Qudsī.

In some narrations the Prophet ﷺ tells this hadith from Allah the Almighty through Gabriel. This is in the hadith of Anas.

Whoever harms a friend [*walī*] of Mine, I declare war on him: In a *mawqūf*[30] narration from Wahb ibn Munabbih: 'Whoever degrades My believing *walī*, is taking Me on in battle.'

Al-Fākahānī said: 'This is a powerful threat, since Allah destroys whoever He makes war upon. It is an eloquent metaphor, since whoever dislikes the one whom Allah loves, disobeys Him, and whoever disobeys Him is hostile to Him, and whoever is hostile to Him, He destroys utterly. And if this is established in the case of hostility, then it is also established that in the case of friendship and loyalty to Allah: whoever is the loyal friend of Allah's friends, will be honoured by Him'.

Al-Ṭūfī said: 'The enemy of Allah's friend is the enemy of Allah, so whoever is hostile to him is as it were making war upon him, and whoever makes war upon him is as it were making war upon Allah.'

My slave draws near to Me with nothing more beloved to Me than that which I have made obligatory upon him. From this we learn that the discharge of obligatory acts [*farā'iḍ*] is the most beloved of acts in the sight of Allah.

Al-Ṭūfī said: 'The command to observe the *farā'iḍ* is absolute, and punishment results from abandoning them, in contrast to *nāfila* actions. However if *nāfila* acts accompany the *farā'iḍ*, then the *farā'iḍ* are more perfect. This is why they are more beloved to Allah, and more effective in bringing one close to Him. Moreover, the *farḍ* action is like a root and a foundation, while a *nāfila* act is like a branch or a building. When one performs the obligations in the required way, and obeys the commandments and respects the Commander, and magnifies Him through obedience, and manifesting the majesty of Lordship and the baseness of slavehood, then using this to draw close is the greatest of actions. Someone who carries out the *farḍ* may be doing so out of fear of punishment, while the person who practices the *nawāfil* is doing so only because of his preference for service. Hence he is rewarded with love, which is the greatest aspiration of the person who seeks Divine proximity through his acts of service.'

And My slave continues to draw nearer to Me with optional acts of devotion [*nawāfil*] until I love him. There appears to be a problem in reconciling this to the previous statement. Given that the *farā'iḍ* are the most beloved of works to Allah, how can they themselves not bring His love? The answer is that what is meant by

nawāfil is that totality of practices which includes the *farā'iḍ*, and perfects them. Moreover, it is customarily the case that 'drawing near' takes place with something other than that which is obligatory for the one who seeks proximity, such as a gift, in contrast to, for instance, taxation, or the repayment of a debt. Further, one of the reasons for the existence of *nawāfil* is to compensate for inadequately discharged *farā'iḍ*, as in the sound hadith narrated by Muslim which runs: 'Look, and see if My slave has some supererogatory act by which his *farīḍa* may be made complete.' This makes it clear that that 'drawing close with optional acts of devotion' takes place for those who have performed what is obligatory, not for those who fail to do so. One of the great ones has remarked that 'whoever is too busy with his obligations to do what is optional has an excuse; while he who is too busy with what is optional to do what is obligatory is beguiled and led astray.'

And when I love him, I am his ear with which he hears, his sight with which he sees: in 'Ā'isha's narration in the account of 'Abd al-Wāḥid: 'his eye with which he sees'; in Ya'qūb ibn Mujāhid's narration: 'his two eyes with which he sees', using the dual also for the 'ear', the 'hand' and the 'foot'. 'Abd al-Wāḥid's narration also adds: 'And the heart with which he comprehends, and the tongue with which he speaks,' a version which resembles also the narration of Abū Umāma.

Here the problem arises of how the Creator can be a slave's hearing and sight, and so on. The answer has several aspects. Firstly, the expression denotes representation and abstraction, so that the meaning is: 'I am his hearing and his sight in his choosing My command, so that he loves My obedience and prefers My service.' Secondly, the meaning is: 'His whole being is occupied with Me, so that he listens with his hearing only to what pleases Me, and sees with his eye only that which I have commanded him to behold'. Thirdly, the meaning is: '"I am the One Who sets his objectives,"' so that it is as though he attains them by His sight, His hearing, and so on. Fourthly, the meaning is: 'I support him as do his sight, his hearing, his hand and his feet, in his struggle against his enemy.' Fifthly, on the opinion of al-Fākahānī, there is an abbreviation in the text, so that the full meaning is: 'I am the protector of his hearing, with which he sees, so that he hears only what is permissible, and I am the protector of his eye, etc.' Sixthly, al-Fākahānī states: 'The text supports another, more subtle interpretation, which is that 'his hearing' means 'that which he hears', since a gerund may take the sense of the passive participle, as when we say, 'So-and-so is my hope', meaning, 'So-and-so is the one for whom I hope'. Here the meaning would be that 'he hears only My remembrance [*dhikr*], and finds delight only in the recitation of My book, and experiences intimacy only in close converse with Me, and beholds only the wonders of My kingdom, and holds out his hand only to that in which is My good-pleasure, etc.'

In his *Book of Renunciation* [*Kitāb al-Zuhd*], al-Bayhaqī relates that one of the

imāms of the Path, Abū ʿUthmān al-Ḥīrī, said: 'Its meaning is that I will be swifter in fulfilling his needs than his own hearing, his sight, his hand, and his foot.' Some of the later Sufis apply it to the spiritual degrees [*maqāms*] of Annihilation and Obliteration, which they mention, these being the utmost point beyond which is the void. In this station, the Muslim is established by God's establishing him, he loves through God's love for him, he sees through His sight of him, without there remaining with him anything to which a name could be attached, or which relates to any matter, or can be characterised by any predicate. The meaning of this discourse is that he witnesses Allah's establishment of him so that he is established, Allah's love of him so that he loves Him, and His sight of him so that he comes, looking to Him with his heart.'

In none of these interpretations is there any scope for the believers in *Ittiḥād*, or those who believe in absolute Unity,[31] since he says, in the remainder of the hadith: 'If he asks Me [...]' which is like an explicit refutation of them.

If he asks Me, I surely bestow it upon him, and if he asks My protection, I surely grant it to him. A problem exists here, namely the lack of response to the fervent prayers of many worshippers and righteous people. The explanation lies in the fact that responses to prayers take many forms. At times the desired result may take place immediately, while at others it may come later for a wise reason known to God. On occasion the response may take place in the form of something different to what was requested, because what was requested was not beneficial.

The hadith reveals [1] the great value of the *ṣalāt*-prayer, which leads to Allah's love for His slave by which he draws near to Him, since it is the place of intimate discourse. In a sound hadith narrated by al-Nasāʾī: 'the coolness of my eye is in prayer.'

Holding to this hadith, some ignoramuses of the 'people of manifestation and discipline' say: 'When the heart is protected with Allah, its passing notions are infallible.' But this has been refuted by the correct followers of the Way, who comment: 'None of that should be taken seriously unless it conforms to the Book and the Sunna; and infallibility [*ʿiṣma*] is for the Prophets, and any other person may err'.[32]

Al-Ṭūfī said: 'This hadith is one of the foundations of the path of wayfaring [*sulūk*] to Allah, and of attaining knowledge [*maʿrifa*] and love of Him. Inner duties constitute 'faith' [*īmān*], and outward duties constitute *islām*, while *iḥsān* [spiritual excellence] occurs when they are combined, as implied in the hadith of Gabriel. *Iḥsān* comprises the stations [*maqāmāt*] of the wayfarers [*sālikīn*], including renunciation [*zuhd*], sincerity [*ikhlāṣ*], vigilance [*murāqaba*], and others.[33]

The hadith also reveals [2] the fact that the prayers [*duʿāʾ*] of whoever performs

his duties and draws close through optional devotions will not be rejected, due to the existence of this truthful promise which is supported by an oath. The explanation of why responses to prayers may come slowly has been given above.

The hadith also explains [3] that however high the degrees attained by a slave of God, to the extent that he becomes God's beloved, he never ceases to petition Him, due to his humility and manifest slavehood [*ʿubūdiyya*].

I do not hesitate in anything which I am to do more than in taking the soul of the believer. The *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ*,[34] in its biography of Wahb ibn Munabbih, narrates: 'I find in the books of the Prophets that Allah the Exalted says: "I hesitate to take the spirit of the believer more than I hesitate to do any other thing."'

Al-Khaṭṭābī writes: 'Hesitation [*taraddud*] is not possible for Allah. However it is possible that its meaning is that "I do not send My messengers repeatedly with regard to something which I will do, as often as I send them for the soul of the believer," as in the story of Mūsā's slapping the eye of the Angel of Death, and his coming repeatedly [*taraddud*] to him.' The real sense is Allah's gentleness for His slave.

Al-Kalābādhī states, in brief, that the reflexive form of the root is here used to indicate a transitive meaning, that is to say, that the word *taraddud* [hesitation] is employed to give the sense of *tardīd* [repeating]. The repetition conforms to the successive states in which the slave finds himself, such as exhaustion, until he reaches the stage at which his love for life is transformed into a love for death, at which point Allah takes his soul. Kalābādhī states that 'Allah may create in the heart of His slave such yearning for Him and love for the encounter with Him that he not only fails to dislike death, but actually longs for it. Hence He states that he hates death, and that this brings him harm, and that because Allah hates to bring him harm He banishes from him the hatred of death by means of the states which He sends upon him. Hence when death comes to him, he prefers and desires it.'

Ibn al-Jawzī attributes the 'hesitation' to the angels which take the spirit; so that Allah attributes the process to himself because their hesitation is itself by His command. It may be, he says, that the angels' hesitation is occasioned by their kindness towards him, so that the angel, beholding the believer's great rank and utility in the world, so respects him that he delays taking his soul; but when the Lord's command is given, he has no choice but to obey.

A fourth interpretation is that the expression is framed in the species of language which we understand, although the Lord transcends what it implies; rather as He says 'When he comes to Me walking, I come to him running.'[35] It is like the hesitation that one of us feels when purposing to smack his son to teach him manners: our love for the child may cause us to hesitate in a way that would be foreign to the schoolmaster. Hence 'hesitation' is used here to help us to understand the

reality of Allah's love for His friend.

Al-Kirmānī mentions a fifth interpretation, which is that the believer's soul is taken slowly and deliberately, in contrast to all other matters, which happen suddenly upon the Divine command: 'Be!'.

he dislikes death, and I dislike to bring him harm. In his *Kitāb al-Zuhd*, al-Bayhaqī attributes the following to al-Junayd, the Master of the Group:[36] 'What He dislikes here is the difficulty and suffering associated with death which the believer must experience. The meaning is not "I dislike that he should die", since death brings him to Allah's mercy and forgiveness.' Another of them expressed this as follows: 'death is a fated decree, and takes the form of the separation of the spirit from the body, something which rarely occurs without very severe pain, as is indicated by 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ who, when questioned on his deathbed, replied that he felt as though he was breathing through the eye of a needle, and as though the branch of a thorn-bush was being dragged through the length of his body. Ka'b relates that 'Umar once asked him about death, and he described it in similar terms. Now, since death has this attribute, and since Allah dislikes harming a believer, he uses the word 'dislike' here.

It is also possible that the bringing of harm refers to the extension of one's lifetime, since that leads to the '*worst time of life*' [16:70], the decay of one's created form, and a decline to the lowest condition.

Shaykh Abu'l-Faḍl ibn 'Aṭā' said: 'This hadith demonstrates the enormous worth of the *walī*, since his Lord's choice has replaced his own choice, and His support for him has supplanted his support for himself, and he has departed from his own power and ability through his sincere reliance [*tawakkul*].' He also remarked: 'It also demonstrates that a person who harms a *walī* but does not then suffer an immediate misfortune in his person, his property or his family, must not be considered safe from Allah's revenge. For his misfortune could occur in some other, even more dire matter, such as a misfortune in his religion.' He also said: 'His statement that which I have made obligatory upon him includes outward [*ẓāhir*] obligations of commission, such as the prayer, *zakāt*, and other forms of worship, and also obligations of omission, such as fornication, murder, and other forbidden acts. It also includes inward [*bāṭin*] obligations, such as knowing Allah ['*ilm bi'Llāh*], love and fear of Him, and reliance upon Him. These also subdivide into duties of commission and of omission.' He also said: 'Furthermore, the hadith contains an indication that the *walī* is informed of hidden matters [*mughayyabāt*], through the insight that Allah *ta'ālā* has given him. This is not obstructed by the apparent meaning of His word, *Knower of the Unseen* [ghayb], *so no-one is informed over His unseen, save the messengers who enjoy His good-pleasure* [72:27], for this passage does not exclude the inclusion of some of his followers inasmuch as they are his followers, just as we correctly say: "Only the minister visited the king today", when it is well-known that some of the minister's servants accompanied him'.[37]

Note: It is not clear why this hadith has been included in the chapter on humility. Al-Dāwūdī records that 'this hadith has nothing to do with the subject of humility,' while another has written that 'It would have been more appropriate to have incorporated it into the previous chapter, which concerns disciplining the self. Al-Bayhaqī included it in a chapter which he called 'Effort in Obedience and Constant Servitude'.

In defence of al-Bukhārī, the following points have been noted. Firstly, there is al-Kirmānī's observation that drawing close to Allah through optional acts of devotion can only take place where there is absolute humility and reliance on Allah. Secondly, Kirmānī also notes that some hold that the quality is implicit [as a response to] His words, 'I become his hearing', and His 'hesitation'. He also has a third explanation. A fourth occurs to me, which is as follows. Humility is necessarily implied by His words, 'Whoever harms a friend of Mine,' since this warns us against harming Allah's friends, and requires us to be their ally; and being loyal to all Allah's *awliyā'* is only possible when there is absolute humility, since among them there are dusty, wild-haired ones, to whom ordinary people pay no attention.[38] There are a number of sound hadiths which encourage humility, but none which conforms to his conditions of reliability, so in this chapter he included these two hadiths instead. Among the other hadiths are: 'Allah the Exalted has revealed to me that you should be humble, until not one of you boasts that he is superior to anyone,' a hadith which is narrated by Muslim, Abū Dāūd and others. There is also the prophetic hadith narrated by Abū Hurayra which runs: 'Nobody humbles himself before Allah without being exalted by Him,' which is also in Muslim and Tirmidhī.

6503/145

Sa'īd ibn Abī Maryam < Abū Ghassān < Abū Ḥāzim < Sahl narrated that 'God's Messenger ﷺ said: "My mission and the Hour are like these two." He pointed with his two fingers, and stretched them out.'

The Hour: the Day of Arising. Its prime meaning is 'a period of time', and in the usage of the horologists it denotes one twenty-fourth part of a night and day.

Like these two. Ibn al-Tīn said: 'There is disagreement on the meaning of this. Some say that it means, 'Like the length that is between the forefinger and the middle finger', while others say that the meaning is that there shall be no prophet between him and the Hour. Al-Qurṭubī writes: 'The purport of the hadith is to show the imminence of the Hour.' According to al-Bayḍāwī: 'Its meaning is that the precedence of his mission over the arrival of the Hour is in proportion to the

excess length of one finger over the other.' It is also said that that it means that his summons will continue without interruption, just as there is no space between the two fingers.

According to al-Qurṭubī in his *Tadhkira*:[39] 'The hadith means that the Hour will come soon. There is no contradiction between this and his statement in another hadith that "the one asked knows no more than the questioner", for the meaning of the present hadith is that there shall be no prophet between him and the Hour, just as there is no finger between the forefinger and the middle finger. This awareness does not entail knowledge of its exact time, it simply indicates its imminence, and that its preconditions have come in sequence, as He says: *Its preconditions have come* [47:18], and as al-Ḍaḥḥāk commented: "the first of its preconditions is the mission of Muḥammad ﷺ." The wisdom behind the existence of preconditions is that the heedless should be woken up and urged to repent and make ready.'

ʿIyāḍ said: 'Some have attempted to interpret this as meaning that the difference between the length of the two fingers corresponds to the remaining life of the world, and that the world's total age is seven thousand years. They ground this in narratives which are not sound.'

6507/156

Ḥajjāj < Hammām < Qatāda < Anas < ʿUbāda ibn al-Ṣāmit: 'Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whosoever loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet him, and whosoever dislikes meeting Allah, Allah dislikes meeting him." ʿĀ'isha, or another of his wives, said: "We dislike death!" And he replied, "It is not like that; but the believer, when death attends him, is given the glad news of Allah's good-pleasure and honouring, so that there is nothing which is more beloved to him than that which lies before him, so he loves to meet Allah, and Allah loves to meet him. And the disbeliever, when death attends him, is given tidings of Allah's punishment and torment, so that there is nothing which is more hateful to him than that which lies before him. He dislikes meeting Allah, and Allah dislikes meeting him."

The ulema hold that Allah's love for His slave consists in His willing good for him, guiding him to Him, and blessing him. His dislike for His slave entails the opposite.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr and others relate that whosoever [*man*] is here not a conditional particle, but a simple subject. The meaning is therefore not that Allah's love for His slave is caused by His slave's love for him (and likewise with the dislike), but is a description of the state of the two groups in themselves in the sight of their Lord. The meaning is that 'the one who loves the meeting with Allah is the one whom Allah loves to meet (and likewise in the case of dislike).'

My own view is that there is no need to claim that the clause is not conditional. In the section on Monotheism [*tawḥīd*] we will discuss a Prophetic hadith narrated by Abū Hurayra which runs: 'Allah, Great and Glorious, says: "When My slave loves to meet Me, I love to meet him".' Therefore the 'whosoever' in the hadith presently under discussion must be conditional.

Whosoever dislikes meeting Allah, Allah dislikes meeting him. Al-Māzurī said: 'When Allah decrees a man's death, he must necessarily die, even should he dislike meeting Him. If Allah disliked that he should die, he would not die. Hence the hadith is to be interpreted as meaning that Allah (sublime is He!) dislikes forgiving him, and wishes to distance him from His mercy.'

ʿĀ'isha, or another of his wives. In the copies of Bukhārī this doubt is specified. However Saʿd ibn Hishām, in his own narration from ʿĀ'isha, states that it was definitely ʿĀ'isha who made this statement.

Al-Khaṭṭābī said: 'Meeting takes several forms. One of these is "vision". Another is "resurrection", as in His saying: *Those who cried lies to the meeting with Us* [6:31]. Another is "death", as when He says: *Whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord - for verily the term of Allah is coming* [29:5], and when He says: *Say: the death from which you flee shall surely meet you* [62:8].'

Ibn al-Athīr says in the *Nihāya*: 'What is meant by meeting Allah here is the voyage to the other world and questing for what is with Allah. The reference is not to death itself, since everyone dislikes death. So whoever renounces the world and despises it, loves the meeting with Allah; but whoever prefers it and inclines towards it, dislikes the meeting with Him, since he will reach that meeting only through death.'

Imām [Abū ʿUbayd] al-Qāsim ibn Salām said: 'In my view this does not indicate the dislike of death and its agonies, since virtually everyone will have to confront these. What is reproached in the hadith is the preference for the world and inclination towards it, and disliking the journey to Allah and the other world. This is made clear by Allah's reproach of a people who loved this world, where He speaks of *those who do not hope for the meeting with Us, and are satisfied with the life of this world, and are serene in it.* [10:7]

Al-Nawawī has said: 'The hadith means that the love and the dislike which are religiously valid are the states which appear in one's death throes at the time when repentance is no longer accepted, for at that time the true situation is unveiled to the dying person and his destination is made manifest to him.'

This hadith contains benefits other than the above. [1] The people of goodness are mentioned first, because of their distinction, despite the fact that the evildoers are more numerous. [2] Requital is akin to the act, so that He requites love with love, and dislike with dislike. [3] The believers will look upon their Lord in the next world (although this could be disputed, since 'meeting' is a more general

term than 'beholding', and it is remotely possible that the meeting here implies only a meeting with Allah's reward). [4] When signs of happiness appear upon the man nearing death this is an indication that he has been given good news; and vice versa. [5] Loving the meeting with Allah is not obstructed by the prohibition on longing for death, for the former is possible without the latter.

One commentator has mentioned that Ibrāhīm ﷺ asked the Angel of Death, who had come to take his spirit: 'Have you ever seen a friend [*khalīl*] slay his friend?' And Allah the Exalted inspired the angel to ask him: 'Have you ever seen a friend who dislikes to meet his friend?' And he replied, 'O Angel of Death, now take my spirit!'

6512/164

Ismā'īl < Mālik < Muḥammad ibn 'Amr ibn Ḥalḥala < Ma'bad ibn Ka'b ibn Mālik < Abū Qatāda ibn Rab'ī al-Anṣārī, that a funeral once passed by Allah's Messenger ﷺ, who said: 'He has found rest, or others have found rest from him.' They said, 'O Messenger of God, how is that?' and he replied: 'The believing slave finds rest in Allah's mercy from the fatigue and misfortunes of the world, while the absence of the corrupt slave brings rest to humanity, the land, the trees and the animals.'

According to Ibn al-Tīn: 'It is possible that the believing slave denotes only the Godfearing, or it may apply to every believer, while the corrupt may refer to the unbeliever, or to the sinner.'

Al-Dāwūdī said: 'The slaves find rest from him because of the detestable things he used to do. If they reproached him, he would harm them, and if they let him be, they would incur a sin.' The land finds rest from the sins he used to commit, since sins are a cause of drought, which destroys livestock and family.'

Al-Bājī qualified al-Dāwūdī's first point by saying that when someone is afflicted by his harm he does not sin if he lets him be, for he has reproached him with his heart, or he may reproach him in a way which does not cause him to harm one.

It is possible that the slaves' 'finding rest' from him refers to the oppression which he had inflicted upon them, and that the land finds rest from him because of his unjust appropriation of it, and obstruction of its rights, and its improper use. The animals find rest because he used to exhaust them unlawfully. And Allah knows best.

6515/166

Abu'l-Nu'mān < Ḥammād ibn Zayd < Ayyūb < Nāfi' < Ibn 'Umar: God's Messenger ﷺ said: 'When one of you dies he is shown his place by morning and

evening: either the Fire or the Garden, and it will be said: "This is your place until you are resurrected unto it."'

Shown: to the spirit [*rūḥ*] and to the aspects of the body which are connected to it so as to permit perception of delight and suffering.

Al-Qurṭubī holds that there are two possibilities here: the showing may be to the spirit alone, or to the spirit and to part of the body.

Ibn Baṭṭāl records that what is meant is communication of the fact that this will be the place of the requital of your works. The repetition is to supply a reminder of this. He finds a proof in the fact that the bodies dissolve, and 'showing' cannot be done to something that has dissolved, thus concluding that 'the "showing" which is to continue until the Day of Arising is only and uniquely to the spirits. To this it has been objected that to interpret the 'showing' as 'informing' is a departure from the apparent meaning without any justification, something which is impermissible.

The 'showing' to the pious believer and the unbeliever is clear; as for the believer who sins, it is possible that he will be shown the place in the Garden to which he will eventually pass.

The resolution of this difficulty is apparent from the hadith of Abū Hurayra narrated by Ibn Abi'l-Dunyā and al-Ṭabarānī, and which Ibn Ḥibbān considers sound [*ṣaḥīḥ*]. This hadith, which pertains to the questioning in the grave, runs: 'Then one of the doors of the Garden will be opened for him, and he will be told: "This is your place, and what Allah has prepared for you"; so he increases in anticipation and joy. Then one of the gates of the Fire is opened for him, and he is told: "This would have been your place, with what Allah has prepared for you therein, had you been a sinner," so that he increases in anticipation and joy.' In respect of the unbeliever, the hadith continues: 'Then one of the gates of the Fire is opened for him [...] and he increases in regret and panic.'

6521/178

Sa'īd ibn Abī Maryam < Muḥammad ibn Ja'far < Abū Ḥāzim < Sahl ibn Sa'd, who said: 'I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: "On the Day of Arising mankind shall be gathered together on an off-white land resembling white flour".' Sahl or another narrator added: '"Therein shall be no sign for anyone."'

No sign for anyone. Al-Khaṭṭābī said: 'He meant that it will be flat.'

A 'sign' here means the object which provides road-directions. According to 'Iyāḍ: 'What is meant is that it shall contain no sign of habitation or construction, or any relic of any of the features by which one might be guided along a road, such as mountains and prominent rocks. This reality hints at a difference from the land of the world, which will have perished without hope of return.'

Abū Muḥammad ibn Abī Jamra said: 'This is a proof of Allah's great power, together with a lesson about the detailed events of the Day of Arising, to alert listeners so that they might be ready to save themselves from that terror. It also contains the lesson that the land of the Resurrection shall be far larger than the earth we now inhabit. The wisdom behind its appearance is that since that day shall be a day of justice and making truth manifest, divine wisdom requires that the place in which that will take place must be free of any sin and injustice, so that Allah's manifestation to His faithful slaves will take place on an earth suited to His glory. For the judgement that day will be Allah's alone, and the place must be His alone likewise.'

The hadith also indicates that the land of the present world will have melted away and vanished, to be replaced by the land of the Resurrection. The early Muslims [*salaf*] disputed as to the meaning of His word, *On that day the earth shall be changed to other than the earth, and the heavens.* [14:48] Does it mean that its essence and qualities will change, or only its qualities? The hadith here under consideration supports the former opinion. The latter view is supported by the hadith narrated by al-Ḥākim on the authority of ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿAmr, which runs, 'On the Day of Arising, the earth will be stretched flat as though it were a piece of leather, and the creatures shall be gathered together.' The apparent contradiction can be resolved by holding that all these things will happen to the present earth, but that the land of the Resurrection will be another earth.

6541/216

ʿImrān ibn Maysara < Abū Fuḍayl < Ḥaṣīn: 'I was once with Saʿīd ibn Jubayr who said, "Ibn ʿAbbās narrated to me that the Prophet ﷺ said: 'The nations were shown unto me. I found one prophet with whom an entire nation was passing by. Another prophet was accompanied by a large group. Another prophet was accompanied by ten people; another by five, while some prophets were followed by only one person. Then I looked, and behold, there was a mighty host, and I asked: "O Gabriel! Are these my nation?" and he replied, "No, but look to the horizon." I looked, and behold, there was a mighty host, and he said: "These are your nation. At their forefront there are seventy thousand who face neither reckoning nor punishment." I asked why, and he replied, "They did not resort to cauterisation, nor to asking for charms, nor to seeking omens, and upon their Lord was their reliance." ʿUkāsha ibn Miḥṣan rose to him, and said: "Pray Allah to set me among them!" and he said: "Allah, set him among them!" Then a second man rose to him, and said: "Pray Allah to set me among them!" but he replied: "ʿUkāsha has beaten you to it."''"'

A narration of this hadith in Tirmidhī and al-Nasāʾī presents this as occurring on the night of the *Isrāʾ*. This narration reinforces the opinion of those who hold

that there was more than one *Isrāʾ*, and that a second Night Journey, distinct from that which occurred in Makka, took place in Madina. Ibn Ḥanbal and al-Bazzār have narrated the following with a sound *isnād*: 'The prophets with their nations were shown unto me last night [...]' to the end of the hadith. In Jābir's hadith reported by al-Bazzār we find: 'Allah's Messenger once postponed coming to the ʿIshāʾ prayer until some of the people in the mosque went to sleep [...]' to the end of the hadith. It is clear that the Night Journey which took place in Madina was different from that which happened in Makka. It was during the earlier event that he sought entry into the gates of the heavens, one after the other, meeting a prophet in each heaven, and returned to Allah after conferring with Moses ﷺ about the obligatory prayers. But of many other things which the Prophet ﷺ beheld, some were in Makka, and others were in Madina after the Hijra. Most of these took place as dream-visions. And Allah knows best.[40]

They did not resort to cauterisation, nor to asking for charms, nor to seeking omens from birds. The narration of Saʿīd ibn Manṣūr given by Muslim has 'And they did not administer charms' instead of 'They did not resort to cauterisation'. Shaykh Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiya has condemned this narration, claiming that it was a mistake by its narrator. His reason is that since the charm-maker is doing a favour to the one receiving the charm, how could it be necessary to renounce this action? After all, Gabriel administered charms for the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet administered charms for his Companions, and allowed them to administer charms, saying: 'Anyone who can help his brother should do so' - and helping is required. He [Ibn Taymiya] said: 'As for the one who asks for charms, he is asking someone else and hoping for help from him, whereas complete reliance [*tawakkul*] upon Allah precludes that.' He also said: 'What is intended is that the seventy thousand are characterised by complete *tawakkul*, and hence would not ask others to give them charms, or to cauterise them, and they would not seek omens at all.' Another, however, has responded by saying that an additional part of a hadith narration is acceptable if it comes from a reliable narrator [*thiqa*], and Saʿīd ibn Manṣūr was a great scholar [*ḥāfiẓ*], relied upon by Bukhārī and Muslim, the latter relying upon this narration here. To consider a narrator mistaken when his additional material is to be considered sound is a position which one should not take. Moreover, the objection which led him to fault the narration is implicit also in the case of the one who asks for charms, since his reason is that the person who does not ask for charms from others is in a state of complete *tawakkul*, to which one could reply that the person who makes charms for others should not supply them to him, to secure complete *tawakkul*. There is no proof for what has been asserted in the fact that Gabriel did this, nor in the act of the Prophet ﷺ, since he was acting as legislator and as elucidator of the rules. It could be said that the individuals indicated in the hadith renounce administer-

ing and seeking charms in order to reach a decisive separation, since someone who does these things is not entirely safe from relying on them. Otherwise, charms are not in themselves forbidden, the only exception being those charms which entail or imply empartnering [*shirk*] with Allah. For this reason he said ﷺ: 'Show me your charms, and there is nothing wrong with charms for as long as they contain no *shirk*.'[41] This text indicates the reason for the prohibition.

and upon their Lord was their reliance. This sentence may either be a comment on the foregoing themes of renouncing the seeking of charms, cauterisation, and seeking omens; or it may be an instance of a general statement following a specific one.

According to al-Qurṭubī the majority of scholars hold that *tawakkul* occurs when one has trust in Allah's promise and certainty that His decree will come to pass, but does not neglect the *sunna* in seeking needful sustenance of food and drink, and seeking protection from enemies by acquiring weapons, closing doors, and so on. Nonetheless his heart should not trust in these contingent causes [*asbāb*]. One should, rather, believe that in themselves they can bring no benefit and prevent no harm, for the contingent cause and its consequence are Allah's act, and everything is by His will. When a man relies on a contingent cause [*sabab*] his *tawakkul* is compromised. In this people are, nonetheless, in two categories. The 'arriver' [*wāṣil*] is he who pays no attention to contingent causes, even if he uses them, while the 'wayfarer' [*sālik*] is the person who pays attention to them from time to time, although he protects his soul from this by means of intellectual methods and spiritual experiences [*adhwāq ḥāliya*], until such time as he rises to the station [*maqām*] of the 'arriver'.

Abu'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī writes: 'The place of *tawakkul* is the heart. External movements do not contradict this when the slave of Allah is truly aware that everything is from Allah, and that whenever something comes easily it has been facilitated by Him, and that whenever something is difficult this is by His decree.'

ʿUkāsha ibn Miḥṣan. The word 'ʿUkāsha' (or ʿUkkāsha) may mean: 'curly hair', or a 'spider', or an 'anthill'. ʿUkāsha was of the tribe of Asad ibn Khuzayma. He was one of the first to enter Islam, and was one of the most handsome of men. He made the *hijra*, and fought at Badr. Ibn Isḥāq narrates: 'The Prophet ﷺ said: "ʿUkāsha is the best horseman of the Arabs."' He also narrates: 'On the day of Badr he fought so fiercely that his sword broke in his hand, upon which Allah's Messenger ﷺ gave him a piece of wood, telling him, "Fight with this." He did so, and it turned into a long, white, powerful sword in his hand, with which he fought until Allah granted the victory. The same sword remained in his possession until he died during the War of Apostasy [*ridda*] under Khālid ibn al-Walīd in the year 12.

Beaten you to it. Ibn Baṭṭāl said: 'This means that "ʿUkāsha has beaten you to

achieving these qualities, namely *tawakkul*, the absence of seeking omens, and the other matters mentioned therewith." He refrained from saying, "You are not one of them", or "You do not have their qualities", because of his gentleness with his companions, and his excellent courtesy [*adab*] towards them.

Ibn al-Jawzī said: 'It seems to me that the first speaker was asking with a sincere heart, and therefore received this response, while with the second he [the Prophet ﷺ] might have intended to end the matter. For had he replied in the affirmative to the second, then a third would soon have stood up, and then a fourth, and so on, and not all people merit the state he described.'

Al-Nawawī considered the sounder view to be that the Prophet ﷺ knew through revelation that ʿUkāsha was accepted, but that no revelation was forthcoming in the case of the other man.

Al-Suhaylī said: 'My view is that this took place during an hour of divine response [*sāʿat ijāba*], which, as it so happened, had ended by the time the second man put his question. This is made clear by the words in the hadith version of Abū Saʿīd, which runs: "Then they sat for a while, and talked," and by the hadith narration of Ibn Isḥāq, which includes, after "ʿUkāsha has beaten you to it," the words, "The prayer has grown cold," meaning that its time has ended.'

6571/262

ʿUthmān ibn Abī Shayba < Jarīr < Manṣūr < Ibrāhīm < ʿUbayda, that ʿAbdallāh ؓ said: 'Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "I know the last to leave the Fire, and the last to enter the Garden. He shall be a man who crawls out of Hell, when Allah shall say: 'Go, and enter the Garden.' So he comes to it, but it seems to him to be full, so he goes back, and says, 'O my Lord, I found it to be full.' But He says, 'Go, and enter the Garden.' So he comes to it, but it seems to him to be full, so he goes back, and says, 'O my Lord, I found it to be full.' But He says: 'Go, and enter the Garden; for there you shall have the likes of the world, and ten times its like,' or: 'for there you shall have ten times the likes of the world.' And he says, 'Are you mocking me, Lord, or laughing at me; when You are the King?'" And I saw Allah's Messenger ﷺ laughing until his eye-teeth were visible. And it was said: "He was the lowest of the Garden's people in degree."'

I know the last to leave the Fire, and the last to enter the Garden. According to ʿIyāḍ: 'It is possible that this refers to two individuals, or to two types, or to two categories, which are referred to in the singular here since they have been judged together. It is also possible that 'leaving' here signifies passage across the *Ṣirāt*.'[42]

Muslim, on the authority of Ibn Masʿūd, provides a narration that strengthens the second of these two conjectures: 'The last to enter the Garden shall be a man who sometimes walks, sometimes crawls, and sometimes is scorched by the Fire.

When he has crossed it, he turns round to face it, and says: "Praised be He Who saved me from you".'

You shall have the likes of the world, and ten times its like. The narration of al-Aʿmash adds: 'And he will be asked: "Do you remember the time in which you used to live?" that is, the life of the world. And he replies, "Yes." And he is told: "Hope!"[43] and he hopes.'

Are you mocking me, Lord. The narration of Anas on the authority of Ibn Masʿūd has: 'Are you mocking me, when You are Lord of the Worlds?' Al-Māzurī said: 'This is problematic. Al-Ḍaḥḥāk's interpretation of this as signifying 'His good-pleasure [*riḍā*]' does not fit here. Attributing mockery to Allah is by way of mutuality, even though the mockery on the other side has not been mentioned. ʿIyāḍ reports from one source that 'are you mocking me' should in fact signify 'Do not mock me', and that he utters these words when the unimaginable joy which is before him deprives him of full self-control.' Al-Qurṭubī writes: 'The scholars have discussed many interpretations of this, and the best conclusion is that his words issued from him while he was in a state of astonishment and overwhelming joy.'

or laughing at me. Al-Bayḍāwī said: 'When "laughter" is attributed to Allah this is a metaphor signifying "His good-pleasure".'

And it was said: "He was the lowest of the Garden's people in degree". Al-Kirmānī said: 'This is not the conclusion of the Messenger's words ﷺ, it is a phrase by the narrator, reporting the words of the Companions or other people of knowledge.'

Appendix

FATWĀS[44]

Praise is for Allah, and may blessings and peace rest upon Allah's Messenger ﷺ. This is the discourse of our master, the judge of judges, may Allah benefit the Muslims by the *baraka* of his learning, concerning the person buried in the grave, who is out of human sight, and who is visited by Munkar and Nakīr.

1 Is the dead person made to sit up for the questioning, or does it occur while he is lying down?
RESPONSE: The angels put their questions to him while he is in a sitting position, as is known from the famous hadith of al-Barā', which Abū ʿAwāna considers sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) and which Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal cites in his *Musnad*.

2 Does the spirit (*rūḥ*) wear the body as it used to in life, or not?
RESPONSE: Yes it does; but the apparent meaning of the hadith is that it resides in its upper half.

3 Where does the spirit reside after the questioning?
RESPONSE: The spirits of the believers are in ʿIllīyūn, and those of the unbelievers are in Sijjīn. Every spirit has a connection (*ittiṣāl*) [with the body], which is a spiritual (*maʿnawī*) connection which does not resemble the connection which existed during worldly life. The nearest comparison is with the detached state of the sleeper; some have compared it with the rays of the sun. This is the way to reconcile the divergent traditions which hold that the spirits are in ʿIllīyūn and in Sijjīn, and that the containers of the spirits are also at the containers which are their graves, as Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr narrates on the authority of the large consensus (*jumhūr*).

4 When the earth is replaced over him, and he is given *talqīn*[45] from above the grave, does he hear the words of the one who is doing this, despite the considerable distance between the two?
RESPONSE: Yes he does, due to the connection which we have referred to above. This must not be thought analogous to the condition of a living person buried in a collapsed well, for such a one cannot hear those above him.

5 Does the dead person know of those who visit him?
RESPONSE: Yes, he knows when Allah wants him to know. For the spirits are given permission to act, and have recourse to their homes in ʿIllīyūn or Sijjīn, as in the sound hadith 'The spirits of the martyrs are in the insides of green birds which fly around in the Garden.' This is in the Ṣaḥīḥ; and Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal has a similar hadith concerning the spirits of believers. In the narration of the Ṣaḥīḥ, 'they have recourse to candles beneath the Throne'.[46] None of this stands in the way of the connection discussed above. Whoever regards this as unlikely does so through a comparison with the visible conditions of this worldly life; whereas the conditions prevailing in the *barzakh* are quite different.

6 Does the punishment of the grave afflict the spirit or the body?
RESPONSE: It afflicts them both, although its real essence afflicts the spirit, and the body experiences pain or pleasure along with it. However no sign of this is apparent to a person still in the world who may be watching; were the body to be exhumed it would be found in the state in which it had just been buried.

7 When Munkar and Nakīr come, what do they say?
RESPONSE: This is stated explicitly in the long hadith narrated by al-Barā' in Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal's *Musnad*, and in the hadith of Abū Hurayra given by Ibn Ḥibbān.[47]

8 Should the twig and palm-frond be planted in the middle or the side of the grave, or in another place?
RESPONSE: The sound hadith has prescribed this in general terms, and the purpose is served by planting it in any place at the grave.

9 Does the reward of a Qur'ānic recitation reach the dead person?
RESPONSE: This is a well-known issue on which I myself have written a booklet. To summarise, most of the early ulema held that the answer is yes, but that it is preferable to hold back from a definite, absolute answer, although it is preferred (*mustaḥabb*) to do it, and to do it abundantly.

10 If a dead person is moved from one place to another, does his spirit move to the new place as well, or not?
RESPONSE: Yes. We have already stated that even though the spirit is not a part of the body of the dead person it nonetheless has a connection with it. Therefore this connection will abide wherever the body is taken.

11 If the head is buried separately from the body, where is the spirit?
RESPONSE: The spirit is connected with both, and will be connected with all parts of the body however much they may be detached and separated.

12 When a person is dying, should much medicine be used, or little?
RESPONSE: When he reaches the point of trembling like an animal being slaughtered then medicines are best put away; otherwise attempts to heal him are required by the Law. *And your Lord is Powerful over all things.*

13 Will the person guilty of deficient performance of worship be required to make up the missed acts on the Day of Arising?
RESPONSE: There will be no making-up (*qaḍā'*) at that time. The only making-up that occurs will be the subtraction from his optional acts of worship (*nawāfil*) in order to complete the tally of his obligatory ones. If he has no *nawāfil*, then the subtraction will be made from another category of his good deeds.

14 If a schoolteacher suffers from a disease so that he cannot remain in *wuḍū'* longer than is necessary for performing the obligatory prayers, and would spend the entire day washing if he repeated his ablution each time he broke it, is he allowed a concession (*rukhṣa*) to touch the Qur'ān simply out of necessity?
RESPONSE: Such a person is allowed the concession because of the hardship which would otherwise ensue; however he should make *tayammum*, which takes less time than *wuḍū'*. If the hardship still continues then there is no harm in doing without; and Allah knows best.

15 Are the two angels who sit at the grave the same as the two recording angels, as Tirmidhī has related?
RESPONSE: It appears that if the hadith is well-established they are indeed the ones who used to write down actions in the world.

16 Are they the angels whom Allah has spoken of as *a driver and a witness*?[48]
RESPONSE: There is a difference of opinion here, which has been recorded by Ṭabarī and others.

17 Will the sun come close to people's heads on the Day of Arising?
RESPONSE: Yes, this is true; it is set forth in a sound hadith and belief in it is mandatory.

18 Will the sun exist at the Arising?
RESPONSE: Yes, but only at the standing-place (*mawqif*); after which the sun and moon shall be cast into hell.

19 Shall people be immersed in sweat?
RESPONSE: Yes. It is established in a sound hadith that some of them will be immersed in sweat up to their necks; others up to their chests, others up to their knees, and so on, in accordance with their works.

20 Shall human bodies be restored to their former state, or not?
RESPONSE: Yes. What Allah *ta'ālā* shall restore will be their former bodies, not something else. This is the sound, correct view, and I believe that whoever holds otherwise is wrong, because he goes against the evident meaning of the Qur'ān and the Hadith.

And Allah *subḥānahu wa-ta'ālā* knows best;
and unto Him is the last return. And may
He grant blessings and abundant peace
to our master Muḥammad
and his family and
companions,
until the
Day of
Arising

NOTES

1 A pupil of Imām ʿAḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī in *kalām*, and author of *Ḍamāʾir al-Qurʾān*, a Sufi *tafsīr*.

2 A native of ʿAyntāb (north of Aleppo), he became Ḥanafī chief *qāḍī* of Egypt, and inspector-general of *awqāf*. He was the disciple of the Sufi shaykh ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Sīrāfī, who accompanied him from Jerusalem to Egypt. Among his works is *ʿIqd al-Jumān fī tārīkh ahl al-zamān*, on history.

3 A well-known preacher of Cairo; he also wrote *al-Mawāhib al-Laduniyya fi'l-Minaḥ al-Muḥammadiya* ('Gifts of the Divine Presence on the Muḥammadan Bestowals'; on the virtues of the Prophet ﷺ), and the *Maqāmāt al-ʿĀrifīn* ('Stations of the Gnostics', on Sufism), and a commentary on Imām al-Būṣīrī's poem *al-Burda*.

4 This is, of course, one reason why English translations of the hadith literature cannot be used as a basis for *fiqh* discussions.

5 *Hady al-Sārī muqaddimat Fatḥ al-Bārī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyyāt al-Azhariyya, n.d.), I, 9-11.

6 *Hady*, 243.

7 *Hady*, 235.

8 *Hady*, 243.

9 *Hady*, 235.

10 *Hady*, 235.

11 *Hady*, 243.

12 *Hady*, 247.

13 *Hady*, 247.

14 These details are taken from Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ al-Zuhūr fī waqāʾiʿ al-duhūr*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li'l-Kitāb, 1404/1984), II, 268-70; Yūsuf ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Manhal al-Ṣāfī wa'l-mustawfā baʿd al-wāfī* (Cairo, al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li'l-Kitāb, 1984), 19-23; Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī, *al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmiʿ li-ahl al-qarn al-tāsiʿ* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Quds, 1353), III, 36-40; Aftab Ahmad Rahmani, 'The Life and Works of Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī', *Islamic Culture* 45 (1971), 203-212, 275-293; 46 (1972), 75-81, 171-178, 265-272, 353-362; 47 (1973), 57-74, 159-174, 257-273. Rahmani's work is derived mainly from a manuscript of Imām al-Sakhāwī's biography of Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Jawāhir wa'l-Durar*.

15 Her name, 'daughter of the saddle', was given her when she was born during a journey to the Ḥijāz.

16 Rahmani, *IC* 46 (1972), 353. At the time Ānas Khātūn was in her seventies.

17 Ibn Iyās, 207.

18 Ibn Taghrībirdī, 23.

19 *Dīwān Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī*, ed. Syed Abul Fazl (Hyderabad, n.d.), 16. This edition uses the original manuscript preserved in the Egyptian National Library (MS Taymūriyya 811), dated 852. It also makes use of other manuscripts, which all include this poem.

20 That is, *ghaban* means stupidity.

21 A popular proverb, not a hadith.

22 The place of this topic in the chapter of Raqāʾiq is clear: the death of a child or a loved one softens the heart, banishes pride and exulting in *dunyā*, and such are the conditions for salvation.

23 Bukhārī, Adhān, 155; Muslim, Masājid, 142.

24 The occurrences recorded in these hadiths were Prophetic miracles (*muʿjiza*), while a miracle worked through pure-hearted, saintly believers, is known as a *karāma*.

25 *Ahl al-ṣuffa*: a spiritual elite among the Companions who resided in a veranda attached to the house of the Prophet ﷺ, who are here briefly described by Abū Hurayra. In his comments on a similar hadith, Imām al-Ḥākim writes: 'I have pondered these narrations concerning the People of the Veranda, and I have found them to be among the greatest of the Companions in scrupulousness (*waraʿ*) and reliance upon Allah, and in constant service of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. For them, Allah chose what He chose for His Prophet ﷺ, by way of poverty, indigence, and humbleness in worship of Allah, and leaving the *dunyā* to its people. They are the group to which the Sufis belong, generation after generation; so that whoever follows their *sunna*, and their patient endurance of renouncing the things of this world, and their familiar intimacy with poverty, and their refusal to beg, are in every age the followers of the *ahl al-ṣuffa* and the people of reliance upon their Creator. It has been narrated to me by the shaykh of *taṣawwuf* in his age, Abū Muḥammad Jaʿfar ibn Nuṣayr al-Khuldī, on the authority of Abū Muḥammad al-Jarīrī, who said: 'I once heard Sahl al-Tustarī saying: "When Allah the Exalted sent the Prophet ﷺ, there dwelt upon the earth seven kinds of men: kings, farmers, nomads, merchants, craftsmen, hired labourers, and the weak and poor. He did not command any of them to change his vocation; but he commanded them to know, and be certain, and to fear God, and to rely on Him in whatever circumstance they lived." And Sahl (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The intelligent person should declare: 'It is not proper that after having known that I am Your slave, that I should set my hope in other than You; for I do not imagine that You, Who have created and fashioned me as Your slave, should require me to rely on myself.'"' Al-Ḥākim said: 'Allah's Messenger ﷺ has described this group in terms of the qualities by which Allah has singled them out from among the other groups; so whoever possesses these qualities, rightly possesses the name of *taṣawwuf*.' (al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-ṣaḥīḥayn* (Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-Uthmāniyya, 1334-42), III, 15-6.

26 In addition to his celebrated *Ṣaḥīḥ*, Imām al-Bukhārī also wrote a *Tārīkh*, whose purpose is to identify the narrators listed in isnāds. He wrote it on moonlit nights beside the tomb of the Prophet ﷺ.

27 Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar al-Suhrawardī, *ʿAwārif al-maʿārif* (Cairo: al-ʿĀlamiyya, 1358), 47.

28 *Firāsa*: the spiritual intuition of the person close to Allah. Imām Tirmidhī relates the following hadith: 'Beware the *firāsa* of the believer, for he sees with the light of Allah.'

29 i.e. gatherings for irreligious purposes are best shunned.

30 A *mawqūf* report is one that goes back only to a Companion.

31 *Ittiḥād* is 'the combination of two essences into a single essence', which is impossible. See ʿAlī al-Jurjānī, *al-Taʿrīfāt*, ed. Muḥammad al-Qāḍī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-Lubnānī, 1411), p.26.

32 As stressed by Imām al-Ghazālī, *Disciplining the Soul* (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1995), 88.

33 Here we have the Imām's understanding of the Hadith of Gabriel. The text of this is: ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ؓ said:

One day when we were with Allah's Messenger, we were visited by a man whose garments were exceedingly white and whose hair was exceedingly black, upon whom no signs of travel could be seen. Sitting before the Prophet ﷺ, leaning his knees against his and placing his hands on his thighs, he said: "Tell me, Muḥammad, about *islām*."

The Prophet replied: "*islām* is that you should bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and that Muḥammad is Allah's Messenger, that you should establish the Prayer, pay the Zakāt, fast in Ramaḍān, and make the Ḥajj to the House if you are able to go."

The man said: "You have spoken truly." And we were amazed that he should question him and then confirm that he had spoken the truth. He then said: "Tell me about faith [*īmān*]."

He replied: "Faith means that you believe in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, and the Last Day, and that you have faith in the Decree, both its good and its evil."

The man said: "You have spoken truly." He then said: "Tell me about excellence [*iḥsān*]."

And he replied: "Excellence means that you should worship God as if you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you."

Then the man said: "Tell me about the Hour."

The Prophet replied: "Concerning that, the one who is questioned knows no more than the questioner." The man said: "Then tell me of its foretokens."

He said: "The slavegirl will give birth to her mistress, and you will see the barefoot, the naked, the destitute and the shepherds vying with each other to construct tall buildings."

Then the man departed. After I had waited for a long time, the Prophet asked me, "Do you know who the questioner was, 'Umar?" I replied, "God and His messenger know best." He said: "That was Gabriel, who came to teach you your religion." (Muslim, Īmān, 1.)

Ibn Rajab comments as follows: 'One of the early *'ārifīn* said: "Whoever acts in accordance with his witnessing (*mushāhada*) of Allah, is a gnostic (*'ārif*), and whoever acts in accordance with Allah's witnessing of him, is a sincere person (*mukhliṣ*)." [...] The *maqām* of *mushāhada* is that the slave should act in accordance with his heart's witnessing of Allah, whereby the heart is illuminated by *īmān* and the inner sight (*baṣīra*) passes through into gnosis, until the unseen (*ghayb*) becomes like the seen. This is the reality of the *maqām* of *iḥsān* indicated in the hadith of Gabriel, upon him be peace."' (*Jāmi' al-'ulūm wa'l-ḥikam*, Damascus: Dār al-Khayr, 1417, I, 76.)

34 *The Adornment of the Saints*, a major collection of Sufi biographies by Abū Nu'aym.

35 *Ḥādīth qudsī* in Bukhārī, Tawḥīd, 15.

36 *sayyid al-ṭā'ifa*. The 'Group' are the Sufis.

37 That aspects of the *ghayb*, the world usually outside the realm of sense-perception, are accessible to the *walī* by Allah's leave is demonstrated most obviously by the phenomenon of the righteous dream (*al-ru'yā al-ṣāliḥa*), which is "one sixty-fourth part of Prophecy' (Bukhārī, Ta'bīr, 4). However those who defy Allah by having recourse to magic arts or to astrology are repudiated. Imām Qurṭubī records the following proof: 'When 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the Commander of the Faithful ﵁ wished to march out against the Khārijites, someone asked him: "Are you going to confront them when the moon is in Scorpio?" And he replied, may Allah be pleased with him: "And where is their moon?"' In other words, an astrological conjunction that would bring defeat could not logically apply to both sides. (Muḥammad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li-aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, 1933–50), XIX, 28.)

38 'Many a dusty, wild-haired one, who is rejected at people's doors, would be vindicated by Allah were he to swear by Him.' (Muslim, Birr, 138.)

39 Qurṭubī's work *al-Tadhkira* (*The Memorial*) is one of the most important works of eschatology.

40 Ibn Ḥajar wrote a separate work entitled *al-Ghunya fi'l-ru'ya* ('Enough about the Vision') in which he discusses the Companions' differences of opinion on whether the Prophet ﷺ during the *Isrā'* saw Allah with his eye or his heart. After a detailed discussion he concludes that both took place, during two separate Night Journeys.

41 Muslim, Salām, 64.

42 The *Ṣirāṭ* is the bridge suspended over hell, which all must cross.

43 That is to say, 'hope to acquire now whatever you used to aspire to.'

44 Originally published in 1348 in Cairo by the Idārat al-Ṭibā'a al-Munīriyya as an appendix to the *Fatāwā Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*. The title of the collection is *al-Jawāb al-Kāfī 'an al-Su'āl al-Khāfī* (the 'Adequate Response about the Obscure Questioning'), pp.39–43.

45 The newly-dead person is urged to repeat the words which must be spoken to the questioning angels. See Ibn al-Naqīb al-Miṣrī, *Reliance of the Traveller*, tr. Nūḥ Keller (Beltsville, Maryland: Amana, 1994), 921–4.

46 Muslim, Imāra, 121.

47 They say: 'Behold ye this man who came before you? What do you say about him, and to what do you attest in his regard?' He says: 'Muḥammad! I bear witness that he is Allah's Messenger ﷺ and that he came with the Truth from Allah.' And he is told: 'With that did you live, with it did you die, and with it shall you be resurrected, Allah willing.' Nūr al-Dīn al-Haythamī, *Mawārid al-Ẓam'ān ilā zawā'id Ibn Ḥibbān* (Cairo, al-Maktaba al-Salafiyya, n.d.), 198.

48 Qur'ān 50:21: *And every soul shall come; a driver and a witness shall be with it.*

BIOGRAPHIES

(Does not include narrators appearing only in *Isnāds*)

Abū 'Alī al-Daqqāq (d.404). A leading Shāfi'ī scholar and the shaykh of Imām al-Qushayrī in Sufism. Al-Qushayrī married Abū 'Alī's daughter Fāṭima, who was well-known as a jurist and Sufi in her own right.

Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī (d.543). A Mālikī hadith scholar known as '*al-Qāḍī*' because he was chief judge of his native Seville. He studied under Imām al-Ghazālī. He wrote the *'Āriḍat al-aḥwadhī*, the best-known commentary on the hadith collection of Tirmidhī.

Shaykh Abu'l-Faḍl ibn 'Aṭā' (d.709). This is the Egyptian Shaykh Ibn Aṭā'illāh al-Iskandarī, the pupil of Abu'l-'Abbās al-Mursī of the Shādhilī *ṭarīqa*. He wrote around twenty books, mainly on Sufism, including the famous *Ḥikam* (Aphorisms). Ibn Ḥajar's admiration for him is evident in his biography in *Durar*, I, 273–5.

Abū Hurayra ﵁ (d.58). The famous companion and member of the *ahl al-Ṣuffa*. He is remembered particularly for the enormous number of hadith which he transmitted, made possible by his constant companionship with the Prophet ﷺ during the last three years of the latter's life.

Abū Ismāʿīl al-Anṣārī (d.481). Ḥanbalī hadith scholar of Herāt, who wrote some of the best-known of all Sufi writings, including the *Manāzil al-Sāʾirīn* ('Stages of the Travellers') and the *Munājāt* ('Intimate Conversations'). He is usually referred to as 'Shaykh al-Islām'.

Abū Muḥammad ibn Abī Jamra (d.675, 695 or 699). A Mālikī hadith expert and Sufi of Mursiya in Andalusia, who migrated to Egypt, where he wrote *Jamʿ al-Nihāya*, an abbreviation of Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* that has been the subject of many commentaries.

Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣfahānī (d.430). One of the most respected hadith masters of his day. Compiler of the large *Ḥilyat al-awliyāʾ* (Adornment of the Saints), an important collection of hadiths and sayings of men and women who had achieved closeness to Allah.

Abu'l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d.465). A Shāfiʿī scholar and hadith expert of Nishapur in Central Asia. He is remembered for his *Risāla* (Treatise) on the foundations of the Sufi path.

Abū ʿUthmān al-Ḥīrī (d.298). Another Sufi of Nishapur, well-known for his scrupulousness in following the Sharīʿa, and for his charity and kindness.

al-Aʿmash, Abū Muḥammad Sulaymān (d.148). A Kufan hadith pupil of al-Zuhrī and Anas ibn Mālik. He gave his name to one of the fourteen canonical readings of the Qur'ān.

ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ ؓ (d.42?). A Qurayshite Companion, he is regarded as the converter of ʿUmān to Islam, and as the conqueror of Egypt.

al-Bājī, Abu'l-Walīd Sulaymān (d.474). Mālikī scholar of Spain, who compiled most of his works in Saragossa. He defeated Ibn Ḥazm in debate, and worked to unite the Muslim rulers against the Christian threat.

al-Bayḍāwī, ʿAbdallāh ibn ʿUmar (d.685?). Shāfiʿī scholar of Shirāz, who wrote one the most respected Qur'ānic commentaries, *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl* ('Lights of Revelation and Secrets of Interpretation'), and also a *kalām* textbook, *Ṭawāliʿ al-anwār min maṭāliʿ al-anẓār* ('Ascending Lights from the Rising-places of Discussions').

al-Bayhaqī, Abū Bakr Aḥmad (d.458). Ashʿarī and Shāfiʿī scholar of Nishapur, and the compiler of major hadith collections including the *Shuʿab al-īmān* ('Branches of Faith') and *al-Sunan al-Kubrā* ('The Greatest *Sunan* Collection').

al-Bazzār, Abū Bakr Aḥmad (d.292). Born in Basra, this hadith master taught in Isfahan, Baghdad and Syria. He compiled a famous *Musnad*.

al-Dāwūdī, Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad (d.402). A Mālikī *fiqh* and *kalām* expert from Tripolitania, who is buried in Tilimsān. He wrote a commentary on Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and another on Imām Mālik's *Muwaṭṭa'*.

al-Fākahānī, ʿUmar ibn ʿAlī (d.734). An Alexandrine grammarian and Mālikī jurist, who wrote a commentary on the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd, and a commentary on the *Forty Hadith* of Imām Nawawī.

al-Farrā', Abū Zakariyya Yaḥyā (d.207). Grammarian of Persian origin who became the best-known exponent of the Kūfan school of grammar. He was also a hadith specialist.

al-Ḥākim al-Nīsābūrī, Abū ʿAbdallāh (d.405). Shāfiʿī scholar of Central Asia, and compiler of the hadith collection *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, which lists hadiths which appear to conform to the conditions set by Bukhārī and Muslim but which were not included in their collections.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, Abū ʿUmar Yūsuf (d.463). Mālikī chief judge of Lisbon, and author of many works on hadith methodology and the Arabic language.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Salām, ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (d.660). Famous Syrian Shāfiʿī imam and

companion of the Sufi Abu l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī. He wrote a major text on jurisprudence, *Qawāʿid al-aḥkām* ('Foundations of the Rulings').

Ibn Abi'l-Dunyā, Abū Bakr ʿAbdallāh (d.281). A narrator of ascetical, edifying stories and hadiths, he was born and died at Baghdad.

Ibn al-Athīr, Majd al-Dīn (d.606), of Mosul. Author of a dictionary of unusual words in the hadith, *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-ḥadīth* ('The Utmost in Hadith Obscurities'), and a large hadith collection *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl* ('Compendium of Sources').

Ibn ʿAṭiyya, Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq (d.541). Mālikī jurist of Granada who became *qāḍī* of al-Mariyya. He wrote a famous *tafsīr* which is popular among the Sufi imāms.

Ibn Baṭṭāl, ʿAlī ibn Khalaf (d.449). A Mālikī scholar from Cordova, author of one of the first commentaries on Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

Ibn Bujayd, Abū ʿAmr. Hadith scholar, and author of a *Juzʾ*: a collection of hadiths on a specific topic.

Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad (d.241). Major hadith scholar and jurist of Baghdad; compiler of the great *Musnad*. The Ḥanbalī school of *fiqh* takes its name from him.

Ibn Ḥibbān, Muḥammad al-Bustī (d.352). Widely-travelled Central Asian scholar who became a leading hadith expert, compiling a *Musnad* and an important biographical work.

Ibn Isḥāq, Muḥammad (d.150). A hadith scholar who studied in Medina and Alexandria before settling in Baghdad. He compiled the first complete Sīra work, which is mainly read today in the expanded version of Ibn Hishām.

Ibn al-Jawzī, ʿAbd al-Raḥman (d.597). A renowned Ḥanbalī and Sufi author of Baghdad.

Ibn al-Mubārak, ʿAbdallāh (d.181). Hadith expert from Merv in Central Asia, he studied under Imām Mālik in Madina. He is known for his *Kitāb al-Zuhd* and his *Kitāb al-Jihād*.

al-Jawharī, Abū Naṣr Ismāʿīl (d.393?). A Turk from Central Asia who became one of the best-known Arabic lexicographers. He is principally known for his dictionary *al-Ṣiḥāḥ* ('Sound Usages').

al-Junayd, Abu'l-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad (d.298). The leading Sufi of Baghdad of his day, whose sermons were attended by ulema of all disciplines. In *fiqh* he followed the *madhhab* of Abū Thawr.

Kaʿb al-Aḥbār (d.32?). A Yemeni rabbi who converted to Islam during the reign of ʿUmar ؓ, and reported many stories of the ancient Israelites.

al-Kalābādhī, Abū Bakr Muḥammad (d.380). A *ḥāfiẓ* of hadith, in which discipline he compiled his work *Baḥr al-Fawāʾid* ('Ocean of Benefits'), and a leading Sufi imām who wrote *al-Taʿarruf li-madhhab ahl al-Taṣawwuf* ('Introduction to the Way of the People of Sufism').

Khālid ibn al-Walīd ؓ (d.21). Arab military genius who opposed the Muslims at Uḥud, but who repented, and, as Sayfullāh, the 'Sword of God', led some of the early conquests under Abū Bakr ؓ.

al-Khaṭṭābī, Abū Sulaymān (d.388?). Shāfiʿī hadith scholar and poet who studied and taught throughout the Middle East. He compiled about twelve works, including the *Maʿālim al-Sunna* (or *al-Sunan*) ('Features of the Sunna'), which is a commentary on Abū Dāwūd, and the *Kitāb al-ʿUzla* ('Book of Withdrawal into Solitude').

al-Kirmānī, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad (d.786). Author of one of the greatest commentaries on Bukhārī, *al-Kawākib al-Darārī* ('The Radiant Stars').

al-Kushmayhanī, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad (d.389). From Merv in Central Asia, he was the leading pupil of Imām al-Bukhārī's star pupil Imām al-Firabrī.
al-Māzurī, Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad (d.536). His family was from Māzur in Muslim Sicily, but he spent most of his life in Tunisia. He taught Mālikī *fiqh* to Abū Bakr ibn al-Arabī, al-Qāḍī ʿIyāḍ, and Ibn Rushd. He wrote the first commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and also compiled a work of Ashʿarī *kalām*.
al-Nasā'ī, Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad (d.303). A Shāfiʿī hadith specialist and *qāḍī*, compiler of *al-Sunan*, one of the seven best-known collections of hadith.
al-Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā (d.676). Shāfiʿī jurist and hadith specialist, author of a major commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and of texts of Shāfiʿī law. A major influence on Ibn Ḥajar, who writes 'may Allah be pleased with him' ﷺ after his name. (*Hady al-Sārī*, 1, 4.)
Imām [Abū ʿUbayd] al-Qāsim ibn Salām (d.224). A *fiqh* scholar from Herāt, who died on Hajj. He is regarded as the first author of separate works on the unusual words (*gharīb*) in the hadith and the Qur'ān.
al-Qurṭubī, Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad (d.671). Mālikī jurist and Qur'ān commentator of Spain. Ibn Ḥajar regularly uses his book *al-Tadhkira bi-umūr al-ākhira* ('The Reminder of the Things of the Afterlife') when commenting on eschatological matters.
Rawḥ ibn Zinbāʿ (d.84?). A Successor, sometimes regarded as a Companion, who was a noted worshipper and warrior of the early period.
al-Suhaylī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAbdallāh (d.581). A blind Mālikī historian and hadith expert from the village of Suhayl near Māliqa (modern Malaga). Author of *al-Rawḍ al-Unuf*, the most respected commentary on the *Sīra* of Ibn Hishām.
al-Suhrawardī, Abū Ḥafṣ ʿUmar (d.632). A Shāfiʿī jurist and pupil of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī, and author of *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif* ('Gifts of Knowledges'), one of the classics of orthodox Sufism. His pupils included Imām Muʿīn al-Dīn Chishtī and ʿUmar ibn al-Fāriḍ.
al-Ṭabarānī, Abu'l-Qāsim Sulaymān (d.360). Palestinian hadith scholar who taught in Iṣfahān, where he compiled three major hadith collections, including *al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ* ('The Medium Lexicon').
al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr (d. 310). Celebrated hadith scholar of Baghdad, who compiled one of the longest *tafsīr* works and a world-history.
Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiya, Aḥmad ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm (d.728). A Syrian scholar and popular preacher whose literalist interpretation of the divine attributes resulted in his condemnation by most of the ulema of his time.
al-Ṭībī, al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad (d.743). Hadith scholar of Egypt, who spent all his inheritance and his commercial fortune on the poor. He wrote a well-known commentary on the *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīḥ* of al-Tabrīzī.
al-Tirmidhī, Abū ʿĪsā Muḥammad (d.279). One of the most distinguished Central Asian pupils of Imām al-Bukhārī, and compiler of the *Jāmiʿ*, one of the seven most widely-used collections of hadith.
al-Ṭūfī, Abu' l-Rabīʿ Sulaymān (d.716). Ḥanbalī *faqīh* of Iraq who wrote several works on *uṣūl al-fiqh*, but whose use of *ijtihād* is considered excessive by some ulema. He compiled a popular abbreviated text of al-Tirmidhī's *Jāmiʿ*.
Wahb ibn Munabbih (d.110?). Hadith scholar of the Yemen, regarded as *thiqā* (reliable) by the historians. Some of his hadiths are used by Imām al-Bukhārī.

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